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CARD TRICKS

CARD TRICKS

A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON

Conjuring with Cards

By

Ellis Stanyon

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PREFACE

TRICKS with cards are ever popular, and are within the reach of every one who cares to devote a little time to the study of sleight of hand.

Who has not watched in speechless wonderment, and longed to emulate the nimble-fingered professor as he takes the cards in his hand and causes them to pass thence, invisibly, along his sleeve and finally alight on his white shirt front; or as he throws a card some twenty feet in the air, at an angle of 45 degrees, and causes it to return to his hand, which, during the flight of the card, has seized a pair of scissors with which the card is now severed in twain?

Much that is new appertaining to conjuring with cards has appeared of late years, which, together with a number of simple tricks of sufficient interest to keep the neophyte engrossed in the early stages of

his career, it will be the province of the author in the following pages to reveal. No pains have been spared in compiling this little volume to make it as clear and comprehensive as possible; and the author trusts that his efforts may be the means of enlightening his confrères, and putting in the way of those who have hitherto taken no interest in legerdemain, the innocent recreation of magic with cards.

ELLIS STANYON

INTRODUCTION

Much that is interesting might be told of the history of Playing Cards, and the various games of skill they provide, but it is questionable whether this would interest the conjuring fraternity, who, I have no doubt, would rather get on at once to the subject immediately under consideration. It may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, that many really clever card conjurers never indulge in any game of skill with the cards; and, from what has come under my notice, they are in many cases, ignorant of the laws governing the best known games. Perhaps it is well that this is so.

Of all branches of sleight of hand, the manipulation of cards is the one that deserves the most attention. The prestidigitateur who can perform a number of tricks with an ordinary pack of cards will be a welcome guest anywhere; and, as far as he is concerned, he has the satisfaction of knowing that the cards, and other small accessories required in the production of the various tricks are generally to hand in every household.

Then again, the continual practice necessary to be-

come a neat manipulator of cards will be found to stand the student in good stead when he turns his attention to the other branches of magic. A clever performer with cards very rarely finds any difficulty with coins, balls, and other small objects; and, as far as I have been able to learn, is a neat manipulator of apparatus.

Proficiency in the various sleight of hand movements will be best obtained by practicing in front of a large mirror. By standing, say, four yards away from the glass, the reflection, as it appears to the operator, will be eight yards away from his body, which is sufficient to give an excellent idea of the best movement to make, and what angles to avoid. After practicing in this way a number of times, the mirror may be dispensed with, as the hands will be found to effect the desired positions, as it were, automatically. This being the case, the performer is now in a position to devote his whole attention to the dramatic element, by far the most important feature of a conjuring trick.

The mere mechanical working of a trick, save in very few instances, utterly fails to produce any illusion. It is a matter of common knowledge among magicians that the art of conjuring depends, not half so much in doing marvelous things, as in persuading the spectators that marvelous things are done. What

is really done is often very simple indeed. Evidence of this lies in the fact that a child will, not infrequently, arrive at the correct solution of a trick sooner than an adult. The simplicity of the child suggests a pin, or a piece of thread, and in the majority of cases he is right; while the adult will rack his brain in his endeavor to think out some abstruse problem in mechanics, and by the time he thinks he has found it he is compelled to give it up as a bad job.

I am acquainted with many competent performers who absolutely dread having to give an hour's entertainment to children, and many will refuse rather than accept it. The reason, from what has been said, is pretty clear. The simplicity of the arrangements, however, should not tend to discredit the genuineness of the effect produced. Many little ruses will suggest themselves, in the course of the performance, for catching the unwary spectator, be he young or old, and if successful, the effect is much enhanced. This is what may be considered the interesting side of magic from the point of view of the performer, and it forms a sure test of his ability.

Much of the success of an entertainment depends on the observance of a few old-time rules. The first and foremost of these is, never acquaint the spectators with the nature of the trick you are about to

perform, or they, anticipating your movements, will in all probability discover your secret.

Secondly, never perform the same trick twice during the same evening. This follows as a natural consequence of the first rule.

Thirdly, endeavor as far as possible to have more ways than one of presenting your best tricks. Thus prepared, should you be called upon for an encore, there will be no need for you to sin against the second injunction.

Fourthly, vary your tricks as much as possible. A sleight of hand feat should be followed by a mechanical problem, or one in which chemistry, or any other science, plays an important part. This arrangement will enable you, where practical, to lead your audience to believe that a sleight of hand trick is the outcome of mechanical ingenuity; or to divert their attention in any direction, no matter where, so long as it is sufficiently remote from the true one. Thus, by leading their thoughts into other channels, they are prevented from too closely following your movements.

Lastly, the tyro should thoroughly make up his mind to study sleight of hand, which is absolutely necessary to produce anything like a brilliant effect with cards. Many of the simple tricks may be made doubly interesting, and possibly raised to the dignity

of stage marvels, by the introduction of one or other of the sleights hereafter described; in fact, by skilful combination of the various passes, new tricks may be formed at pleasure. Any trouble taken in the acquisition of dexterity with the cards will be amply repaid by the enthusiastic admiration it calls forth.

The aspirant should not be discouraged by imagining that the necessary practice is a formidable undertaking. Half an hour's study daily will work wonders in the course of six months, during which time the interest is maintained by working the simple tricks, the repertoire being increased as greater skill is acquired.

It is one thing, of course, to tell how a trick is done, and another to do it; and if the student can obtain one or two lessons from an expert he is strongly recommended to do so, as this will tend greatly to facilitate the early stages of his progress. This, however, is not absolutely necessary. If the novice will carefully follow the instructions given, always pack of cards in hand, he will find nothing but what may be accomplished, if he will only devote the necessary time to the object in view.

CARD TRICKS

CHAPTER I

PRINCIPLES OF SLEIGHT OF HAND

The Pass (Sauter la Coupe).—This forms the backbone of card conjuring, and nine-tenths of the most brilliant illusions would be impossible without it. The idea, for conjuring purposes, consists in reversing the upper and lower halves of the pack, so that after the operation, that portion of the cards which was formerly at the top is now at the bottom. The value of this sleight will be appreciated when it is seen that a chosen card having been returned to the centre of the pack may be secretly brought to the top or bottom, or caused to occupy any position at the desire of the performer.

The "Pass" is used, less innocently, by card-sharpers, to neutralize the effect of the "cut," hence its French title "Sauter la Coupe."

Method of Making the Pass.—Place the pack in the left hand, inserting the little finger above that portion of the cards which it is desired to bring to the top. The upper half is now held firmly between the little finger and the remaining three fingers, by

the aid of which it may be lifted from the rest of the pack (see Fig. 1). Now bring the right hand over the cards, grasping the lower half between the thumb and the second and third fingers; and at the same time press the inner edge of the cards well into the fork of the thumb (see Fig. 2).

Under cover of the right hand, the top half is now lifted slightly, as described, at the same time the outer edge of the lower half is raised, until the two portions just clear each other, when by closing the left hand, the pass is made.

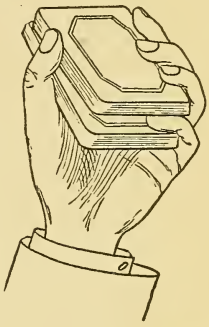


Fig. 1.—Making the Pass (First Stage)

The instructions may appear somewhat intricate on paper, but if the student will follow them, pack of cards in hand, he will find no difficulty that close attention will not speedly remove. It will be well, when first attempting the sleight, to stand with the back of the right hand toward the spectators, in which position the pass, neatly performed, will be quite imperceptible.

To Force a Card.—At the commencement of many card tricks the pack is spread out in front of a spectator, with a request that he will select a card. In many cases he is allowed to choose freely, but it

often happens that it is necessary, for the success of the experiment, that he take a particular card. This is effected by what is known as "forcing" such a card upon him.

The card to be forced is generally placed in readiness on the table, and is added to the top or bottom of the pack by laying the cards on the table for a moment at the conclusion of the preceding trick. As it is hardly likely that a person will select either the top or bottom card, it must be brought to the middle by means of the "pass," in which position it is guarded by the little finger of the left hand.

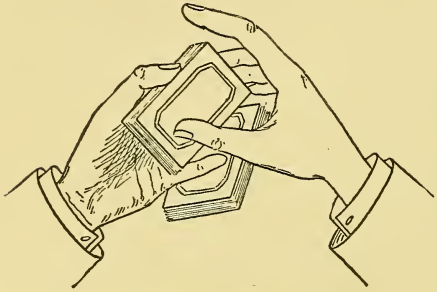


Fig. 2.—Making the Pass (Second Stage)

When about to force the card, the pack is spread out fan-wise in front of the spectator who is invited to choose, and the cards passed on one by one as if to facilitate his choice. As the hand is advanced to draw, the card is pushed temptingly forward; and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it will be the one chosen.

There is no occasion to hurry, coolness is everything in this sleight. Should you pass the card before the extended fingers have had time to seize it, you quickly close the "fan," and carelessly remark, "Certainly, with pleasure; any card you please," saying which, you open the cards a second time. Should the worst come to the worst, and you fail to dispose of the right card, there is no occasion whatever to become confused; you have merely to perform an extra trick, in which a forced card is not required, and try again.

To encourage the novice, I may say that, for the sake of experiment, I have often accomplished this sleight after having told a person that I intended to make him take a certain card. A card may often be forced with one hand, or when the pack is spread out on the table, provided that it be slightly more exposed than the rest. It is curious how much effect such a trifle as this has in determining the choice of the spectator.

The Change.—A card freely shown in the hand of the performer is, a moment later, found to be a totally different one. This is effected by what is known as the "Change."

First Method.—The card to be changed is held between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand; while the card for which it is to be changed

is on the top of the pack held in the left hand (see Fig. 3).

In making the change it will be readily understood that the hands must be brought together if only for an instant; this is so, but the sleight, as will be seen, is so subtle that it escapes notice. Prior to making this movement, the thumb of the left hand pushes

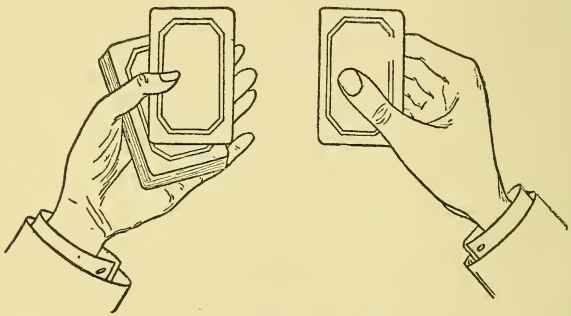


Fig. 3.—Making the Change

the top card forward slightly. The card to be changed is now lowered on to the top of the pack, and at the same time the top card is seized between the first and second fingers of the right hand, and drawn rapidly away ; the thumb of the left hand retains the present top card, and the change is made.

Second Method.—Occasionally, it will be found more convenient to have the card left at the bottom

of the pack instead of at the top. This is accomplished by holding the card to be changed with the first and second fingers, instead of the thumb and forefinger, as in the method already described; in other respects the movement is practically the same.

The bringing of the hands together in the act of making the change is entirely lost in a rapid half turn to the left; but the movement may be rendered even more deceptive by what is really an optical illusion, making it appear that the hands have never even approached each other. The illusion is produced by holding the left hand immediately in front of the body, then, in the act of making the change, to move it a little to the left, leaving the right hand in the position formerly occupied by the left hand. The impression given is that both hands have simultaneously made a movement toward the left, but that their relative positions have remained unaltered. Should the performer mistrust his ability to execute the sleight unobserved, he may do so with absolute safety under cover of the remark, "See, I do not return the card to the pack for a single instant," then, suiting the action to the word, the change is made.

Third Method.—A chosen card having been brought to the top of the pack may be made to take the place of a wrong card shown in the following manner: The operator, holding the pack in the left

hand, takes up what appears to be the top card; in reality, however, he removes two cards, and showing the undermost one exclaims, "That is your card, I believe, sir? Yes; thank you." Then, suiting the action to the word, he makes a quick motion as if returning the card to the top of the pack, but in doing so is checked by a reply from the drawer to the following effect: "No, that is not my card; I drew the seven of clubs, and you have shown me the ten of hearts."

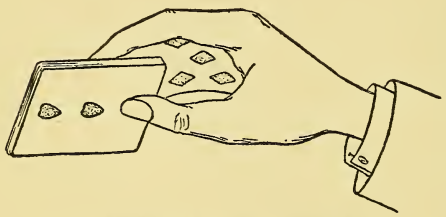


Fig. 4.—Palming a Card (First Stage)

It is needless to say that, in the act referred to above, the undermost card was actually returned to the pack, thus leaving the performer master of the situation.

To Palm a Card.—This consists of holding a card, or several cards, in the palm of the hand, in such a manner as not to attract the attention of the spectator, while at the same time the hand may be used with perfect freedom (see Fig. 4). The ability to do this neatly is of the utmost importance to a

conjuror, and is by no means so difficult as, at first sight, it may appear. Many people, with a vague idea of palming as applied to coins, balls, and other small objects, never dream of the possibility of being able to conceal in the palm of the hand an article of such comparatively large area as a playing card. This, of course, is all in favor of the deception.

In the case of a single card, the "palm" is generally executed after the following manner: We will suppose a card has been freely chosen and duly noted by the drawer. The pack is then spread out, fanwise, to facilitate the return of the card; and when this has been done the "fan" is closed, the little finger being inserted between the two halves, on the top of the chosen card, in readiness for the "pass" (see page 12). The card is brought to the top and pushed, with the thumb halfway off the rest. At the same time, the right hand is brought over the pack, and the card gripped between the first joints of the fingers and the fleshy part of the thumb (see Fig. 5).

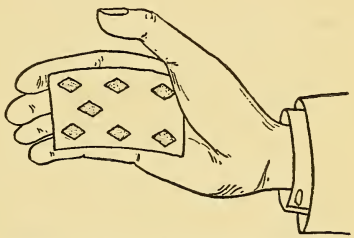


Fig. 5.—Palming a Card (Second Stage)

In the case of several cards the procedure is somewhat changed. We will suppose it is desired to palm off the four top cards prior to handing the pack to be shuffled. The pack is held, as usual, in the left hand. The right hand is brought down over the cards, apparently with the sole object of squaring them together, but really, with the thumb, to push forward six or seven cards about half an inch over the top edge of the pack. The precise number is immaterial so long as you secure four or more, as to stop to count the exact number would be fatal. This having been done, the right hand is removed, and casually shown empty, at the same time both sleeves are pulled back slightly with the object of showing that all is fair and above board.

This movement having been successfully accomplished the cards are palmed in the act of transferring the pack from the left hand to the right while pulling back the sleeves. The right hand very naturally falls on the upper extremity of the extended cards, and tilts them mechanically into the palm, the upper end of the pack forming the fulcrum. At the same instant the upper end of the pack is gripped between the fingers and thumb of the right hand, and forthwith handed to be shuffled (see Fig. 4). In this case, however, the faces of the cards are uppermost.

Should you require to use the hand containing the

palmed cards, do not hesitate, if need be, to bend the cards until their opposite ends all but meeet; any temporary "curl" may be afterwards cured by means of the "ruffle" (see page 25). The palmed cards are returned to the pack, either when taking it from the spectator, or in the act of transferring it from one hand to the other.

The False Shuffle.—The method of palming off the top card prior to handing the pack to be shuffled is, at times, likely to become monotonous to the performer; and is not unlikely, if too often repeated, to lead to detection on the part of the audience. Anything likely to cause the interest to waver, or that tends in any way to sin against one of the cardinal precepts of magic, is to be avoided.

Again, it is not always desirable to place the pack in the hands of a spectator, especially when it is necessary to keep a number of cards in view, or, as is often the case, the whole of the pack in a prearranged order. This double desideratum is secured by employing what is known as the "False Shuffle."

First Method.—A selected card, duly noted, is received back in the pack in the orthodox manner; the "pass" is made, leaving the card at the bottom. A shuffle frequently used by card players is now employed in which the pack is held in the right hand, fingers on the outer and thumb on the inner

end, the back of the cards facing the left hand. The cards are now passed, a few at a time, from the top of the pack into the left hand, the operation being assisted with the left thumb. At the conclusion of the shuffle, the last card, *i. e.*, the chosen one, falls on the top of the pack, to be disposed of as may be required in the course of the trick.

Second Method.—This, again, is a shuffle in ordinary use. It is equally suitable for keeping one or more cards undisturbed at the top of the pack. The shuffle is executed by dividing the pack into two portions, one in each hand, the cards being held in a vertical position, face to face, on the table, a few inches apart. A few cards are now let fall from each portion alternately, the upper ends overlapping as they fall. The performer has merely to take care to hold back the original top cards until the last, when they are again allowed to fall on the top of the pack, and the shuffle is complete.

Third Method.—This shuffle is most suitable for keeping five or six cards together at the bottom of the pack. For the purpose of illustration we will suppose that the required number of cards have been brought to the desired position by the "pass" or other means.

The shuffle is commenced by holding the pack in the left hand and passing five or six of the top cards

into the right hand, the remainder being placed in like parcels, alternately, above and below the first packet. The cards which it is desired to keep in view are finally placed at the bottom of the pack.

Fourth Method.—This is a very subtle arrangement, in the form of a shuffle, for keeping the whole of the pack in a pre-arranged order.

In the first place, the "pass" is made rather low down in the pack, in other words, about one-fourth

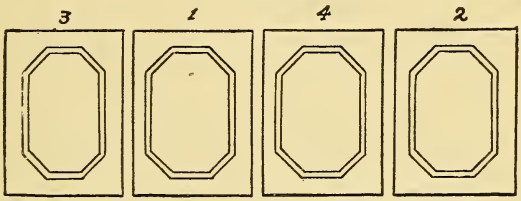


Fig. 6.—The False Shuffle

of the cards are brought to the top, the division being kept by means of the little finger of the left hand. The whole of the cards are now taken in the right hand, fingers at the top end, and thumb, which at the same time keeps the opening between the two portions, at the bottom end of the cards. The cards are now held horizontally, face downward, a few inches from the table, on which they are allowed to fall in four heaps, as indicated in Fig. 6, the under-

most packet falling at 1, the next in order at 2, and so on; finally, that portion of the cards brought to the top by the "pass" is allowed to fall at 4. The operation is completed by placing, with the left hand, heap 1 on heap 4; with the right hand, heap 2 on heap 1; and, with the left hand, heap 3 on top of all, when it will be found that the cards occupy the same positions as they did before the "pass" was made. By a little ingenuity on the part of the performer, this shuffle may be varied, and be made more complicated, ad lib.

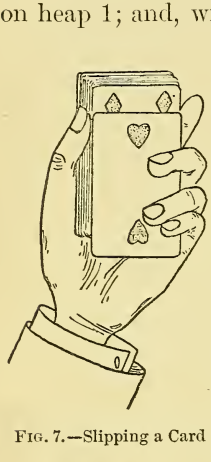


Fig. 7.—Slipping a Card

I have dwelt at some length on trick shuffles, but have found this necessary, inasmuch as many tricks depend, for the most part, on one or other of those mentioned.

To Slip a Card.—This sleight, although very simple, is not to be despised, as it plays the leading part in many excellent tricks. It is performed by holding the pack in a horizontal position, face downwards, in the left hand. The right hand advances and, apparently, withdraws the undermost card; in reality, however, this card is drawn back slightly with the

third finger of the left hand (see Fig. 7), and that next above it removed.

For a practical application of this movement, see page 49.

The Ruffle.—This is really, so to speak, an ornamental sleight, of which many are frequently used, either as proofs of dexterity, or for the more legitimate purpose of diverting the attention of the spectators from the true modus operandi of the trick. I shall have occasion to revert to this in the following pages.

The "Ruffle" is executed by holding the pack in the left hand, with the thumb pressed firmly on the centre of the cards. The right hand grips the cards, with the second and third fingers at the top and the thumb at the bottom. The upper edges of the cards are bent upwards and allowed to spring from the fingers, one by one, causing a sharp, crackling sound, from which the sleight derives its name.

To Throw a Card.—This, again, is a sleight of an ornamental character, but in addition to this, when successfully executed, forms an indubitable proof of the dexterity of the performer.

A card is held by one end between the fingers and thumb of the right hand, with the forefinger on the outer corner (see Fig. 8). The card is thrown forward at an angle of 45 deg., with all the force at

command, as indicated by the arrow; and, as it leaves the hand, the forefinger, with a quick pull on the corner, causes it to revolve rapidly on its own axis. When the force with which the card is thrown forward becomes spent, the fact that it is still revolving rapidly causes it, so to speak, to slide back on the air and return to the hand of the performer.

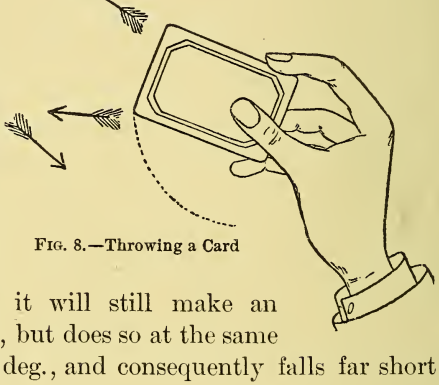


Fig. 8.—Throwing a Card

The principle will be better understood if notice be taken that when the card is thrown in a horizontal line, as indicated by the second arrow, it will still make an effort to return, but does so at the same angle, *i. e.*, 45 deg., and consequently falls far short of the mark.

The card may also be thrown from one side of a theatre to the other by holding it as shown in Fig. 8, and causing it to revolve slightly as it leaves the hand. In this case, however, no pull must be given to the outer corner.

An excellent "vanish" for a card is provided with

this sleight. The pack is held in the left hand, and the card to be vanished in the right. The card is thrown into the air several times, and returns to the hand in the manner explained; finally, under cover of making an effort to throw it a considerable distance, the hands are brought in contact with each other, and the card left on the top of the pack. The right hand still continues its upward movement, the effect being to the spectators that the card disappears in the air from the tips of the performer's fingers. As you are careful to conceal the fact that you intend to vanish the card in this direction, the illusion is perfect.

By way of variation the returning card may be caught between the blades of a pair of scissors, and if desired cut into two portions thereby. To do this hold the scissors under the cards in the left hand in such a manner that, having thrown the card, they may be quickly taken in the right hand. The card may now be caught as described.

To Spring the Cards from One Hand to the Other.—This also is a sleight requiring considerable dexterity. The pack is held by the ends between the thumb and the two middle fingers of the right hand (see Fig. 9), the back of the cards bulging slightly toward the palm. This is important: if the cards are bent in the opposite direction the sleight becomes impossible of execution.

The left hand is brought into close contact with the face of the cards, which are now allowed to escape, one by one, in rapid succession, from the fingers of the right hand, when they forthwith jump into the out stretched palm. The forward movement of the cards is checked by their upper ends coming

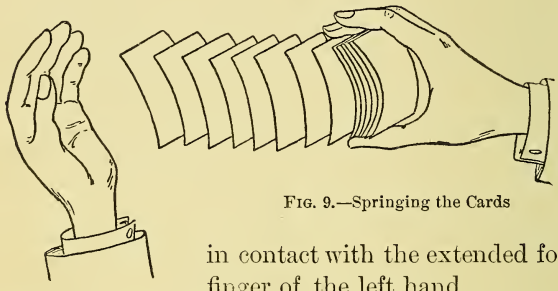


Fig. 9.—Springing the Cards

in contact with the extended forefinger of the left hand.

The movement should be practiced at first with the hands quite close together, the distance being gradually increased as more skill is acquired. A skilled performer will cause the cards to spring a distance of two feet or more; and even this distance may be caused to appear much greater by means of an optical illusion produced by moving the hands from side to side, their relative positions remaining the same, while executing the sleight.

CHAPTER II

SLEIGHT OF HAND TRICKS

The proper selection of the cards for sleight of hand purposes is of the greatest importance. Those of the French pattern are to be recommended as being proportionately smaller, and consequently offering greater facilities in the execution of the various sleights. Then, again, the cards should be of the proper substance to withstand the strain brought to bear upon them: this is essentially necessary for the successful presentation of many of the more fanciful movements. The student, however, is advised to thoroughly accustom himself, from the outset, to the use of the ordinary American pattern, round corners, as he will be frequently called upon to perform with these when no other cards are at hand.

It is usual to prefix a series of tricks with a short display of dexterity with the cards, and, providing the performer has acquired the necessary skill, there is no better course to pursue.

Feats suitable for this purpose are: the springing of the cards from one hand to the other; expert

shuffles (only acquired by tuition and practice); throwing and vanishing the cards in the air; catching a thrown card between the blades of a pair of scissors and severing it in twain; the production of the palm, etc., etc. (see pp. 25, 26, 27, and 42). The audience are much impressed by a really clever display of this kind, and at once credit the performer, and justly, with the ability to deceive them, no matter how closely they may watch; and, as a natural consequence, their vigilance receives a check.

Having introduced the cards as above described, or otherwise, the student may proceed with the excellent opening trick known as—

The Cards Passing up the Sleeve.—This forms the most brilliant sleight of hand trick in the whole range of card conjuring. In effect it is as follows:

The cards having been shuffled, the performer counts off twelve from the top of the pack, and, taking these in the left hand, he holds them at arm's length away from the body. From this position they are caused to pass, invisibly, along the sleeve, being finally produced from the vest, one by one, with the right hand.

The secret depends entirely upon adroit manipulation and address. Having counted off the cards, the performer takes them up, and addresses the company in the following manner: "Ladies and gentle-

n, with these twelve cards I propose to show you
e way the sleeve is actually employed in conjuring."
preads out the cards fan-wise, with both hands,
parently to attract attention, but really to mark
six. This done, he squares up the cards, leaving
six in a position to be palmed off in the manner
scribed at page 19, and shows the right hand
npty. He now transfers the cards to the right
nd, palming the six, and taking the remainder,
omentarily, between the fingers and thumb of the
me hand, while showing the left empty. The six
rds, supposed to be twelve, are now taken in the
ft hand.) "See, I will place the cards in the left
nd, and cause them to pass thence, invisibly, along
y sleeve, and finally alight here (indicating posi-
on inside vest with the right hand, thereby intro-
ucing the palmed cards), just inside my vest."
ne right hand having been removed, and casually
own empty, the "patter," accompanied with
slight crackling sound from the cards, caused
drawing the thumb smartly over their edges, is
ntinued. "If you watch very closely you will be
le to see them go." The secreted cards are now
moved, one by one, care being taken to expose the
lm of the hand prior to each production.

After the first six cards have been brought to light,
e performer pretends to overhear a remark (it not

infrequently happens that the remark is actually made) to the following effect: "Yes! it's all very well, but, of course, there is a duplicate set of cards used," to which he replies, "I beg your pardon, sir." Then, turning to the audience, "A gentlemen here suggests that I have concealed in my vest a number of cards of the same pattern as those I hold in my hand, but I assure you he is quite wrong; at the same time, I would not stoop to deceive you by so mean an expedient. If such were the case, when I have produced twelve cards I should still have twelve in my hand, which would not be consistent with the working of the trick. In proof of this, if I have made no mistake, there are six cards on the table; there should be six in my hand—I will count them."

The cards are now counted, and the opportunity taken, while returning them to the left hand, to palm off five others, leaving one only behind. The performer continues: "Now, please watch me closely, and tell me if you can detect the precise moment the cards leave my hand—there—did you not see that go? No! Well, it's not at all surprising, for they go so quickly that I very rarely see them myself." It is hardly necessary to say that the five cards were introduced into the vest in the act of producing the seventh, the remaining four being brought to light

one by one, accompanied by the "patter" as given above.

It now only remains to dispose of the last card, and this is best done by taking it by opposite ends between the tips of the second finger and thumb of the right hand; and having drawn attention to its suit and value, and that one only remains, to appear to place it in the left hand, which is forthwith closed slightly, and held with its back to the spectators. The card, however, is really palmed in the right hand, and produced from the vest in due course; at the same time the left hand is opened and shown empty.

No difficulty will be found in palming the last card, if held as directed above; as the right hand nears the left, the bottom end of the card is caused to spring from the tip to the root of the thumb, the proper position for the "palm." The slight "click" caused by the card as it leaves the tip of the thumb materially aids the deception.

The Card and Cigarette.—This is a capital combination trick, and may be conveniently introduced at the close of that last above described.

The performer hands the pack to be shuffled, and when returned, forces a card (see page 13) on some member of the audience. This done, he returns to the stage for an envelope, and leaves the cards on the

table. He next shows the envelope for examination, drawing attention to the fact that it is quite empty and unprepared. The drawer of the card is now requested to tear it up into small pieces, and place the pieces in the empty envelope ; this he does, with the exception of one piece, which he retains as a means of identifying the card at a subsequent period. The envelope, containing the torn card, is now sealed, and given into the safe keeping of another spectator.

The performer next obtains a cigarette from anyone in the audience, and, having obtained the permission of the ladies, commences to smoke. He is disappointed, however, as the cigarette will not burn, and on breaking it open to ascertain the cause, finds, to his astonishment, that it contains the chosen card, completely restored, with the exception of one corner. The piece left in the hands of the drawer is now fitted to the card, and found to correspond in every way to the missing corner, thus proving, on the post hoc, ergo propter hoc principle, that the card has actually been restored. Attention is next drawn to the envelope, which is found to contain, in place of the torn card, the tobacco from the cigarette.

The trick is thus managed :

The front of the envelope is double, and contains the tobacco from the commencement, but as the

quantity is small and well distributed, a cursory examination reveals nothing out of the ordinary. The envelope is best prepared by cutting the front from one and pasting it, round the extreme edge, on the front of another, leaving one side open for the insertion of the tobacco. It will be found a good plan to prepare a dozen of these envelopes at one time, placing them under pressure till dry; when required for use take one, and having filled in the tobacco, close the remaining side, and all is ready.

You must next obtain a duplicate card of the one you intend to force, and having torn a small piece from one of its corners, roll it up—commencing at one end—into the form of a cigarette, completing the deception with a cigarette paper. When about to present the trick, the card to be forced, together with the torn corner, must be placed in readiness on the table under cover of the envelope; the trick cigarette is to hand in the right hand trousers pocket, which should also contain a box of matches, for a reason which will presently appear. We will suppose that you have just concluded the trick of "The Cards Passing up the Sleeve," or any one which leaves a number of cards strewn on the table. When taking up the loose cards it is a very easy matter to add the one from under the envelope, thus bringing it, secretly, to the top of the pack. The "pass" is then

made, to bring the card to the middle in a position for the "force." Having disposed of the card in a satisfactory manner, you return to the table, leaving the pack thereon, and take up the envelope, also securing the torn corner, which must be kept concealed in the fingers of the right hand. Now request the drawer to tear the chosen card into a number of small pieces, and while he is doing this, draw attention to the fact that the envelope is quite empty, allowing several spectators to look inside. Some amusement may be caused by remarking to a stout gentleman, "Should you possess any doubt, sir, as to the truth of my statement, I shall be happy to allow you to get inside, and take a walk round."

At this stage of the trick the mutilated card is dropped into the envelope, whereupon the performer immediately removes one piece and hands it back to the drawer, with a request that he will keep it as a means of identification ; it will be readily understood that the piece removed is the corner previously palmed, and which corresponds to the card in the cigarette.

The dénouement will now be clear ; you have merely to close the envelope and proceed as described. Prior to asking for the loan of a cigarette the trick one is palmed, and subsequently changed for the borrowed one ; the borrowed one is left in the trou-

sers pocket, under cover of removing the match-box.

In conclusion, the envelope is opened from the front, and the tobacco revealed, care being taken not to expose the concealed card.

A very ingenious arrangement for working the above trick, which obviates the necessity of providing a second pack of cards in order to obtain a duplicate, is as follows: A diamond "pip" is cut from an old card, and thinned down until only the surface paper remains; this is then attached, with a little paste, to a seven of diamonds, in such a manner as to form an eight of the same suit, and the duplicate is complete. The prepared card would, of course, be the one "forced," as the mutilation obliterates all traces of preparation.

To Pass a Card Through a Handkerchief.—The trick I am about to describe, as it appears to the spectators, consists of passing a playing card through the centre of a borrowed handkerchief. A card is freely chosen, and after due note has been taken of its suit and value, it is returned and shuffled with the rest of the pack, which is then wrapped in a borrowed handkerchief and held suspended by the four corners, as shown in Fig. 10. At this stage of the trick, the performer shakes the handkerchief slightly, and as he does so the chosen card is seen to gradually

make its appearance at the bottom; as the shaking continues, the card becomes more and more visible, and finally falls to the ground, the effect, to the onlookers, being that it has actually penetrated the handkerchief.

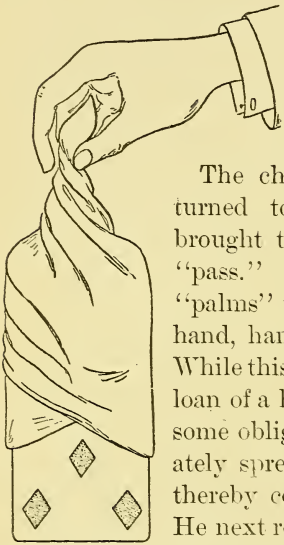


Fig. 10.—Passing Card Through Handkerchief

The means by which the trick is accomplished are as follows:

The chosen card, having been returned to the pack, is forthwith brought to the top by means of the "pass." This done, the performer "palms" the card, and, with the same hand, hands the pack to be shuffled. While this is being done, he obtains the loan of a handkerchief (cambric) from some obliging spectator, and immediately spreads it over the right hand, thereby concealing the palmed card. He next requests the person who shuffled the cards to place the pack, face upward on the centre of the handkerchief, by which means it is very naturally brought immediately over the concealed card.

The next step is to fold the cards in the handkerchief. This is done as follows:

That part of the handkerchief lying on the forearm is first brought over the face of the cards, which are then raised, still covered, by their hinder end, with the fingers and thumb of the left hand. This movement leaves the chosen card on the outside, at the rear of the handkerchief, in which position it is completely concealed by bringing the opposite sides of the handkerchief round to the back in the act of concluding the operation of folding up the cards. The pack is then screwed up tightly, and the position of the whole reversed (see Fig. 10). From this point, the trick proceeds as already described.

When handing the cards to be shuffled, in this or any other trick, you may add to the amusement by giving them into the hands of a lady, and, all things considered, indulging in the following little pleasantry: "I always like to hand the cards to a lady for this purpose; you see—ladies are generally understood to be much better shufflers than gentlemen."

To Pass any Number of Cards along the Sleeve, and Produce them from the Breast Pocket.—This is an excellent little trick of the extempore order, and suitable for introduction at any time.

The performer takes up the pack, and, spreading it out fan-wise, draws attention to the fact that it contains the full euchre or piquet complement of

cards, viz., thirty-two. This done, he undertakes to pass any number of cards from the pack, held in the left hand at arm's length, along the sleeve and to produce them from the breast pocket, previously examined and found empty; the number is to be decided upon by the audience, but in order that the experiment should not become monotonous, it is advisable that the number chosen should not exceed, say, a dozen. We will suppose, therefore, for the sake of illustration, that the number decided upon be eight.

The trick is thus managed:

The object of the operator in spreading the pack fan-wise at the commencement of the trick is to enable him to secretly palm off a number of cards—the precise number is immaterial, so long as he secures more than eight—then squaring the pack together, and placing it in the left hand. The "palm" is introduced into the pocket in the act of producing the first card; the following seven cards are brought to light in due course, and replaced on the top of the pack as produced, the palm of the hand being shown in a casual manner prior to each production. As each card is supposed to leave the pack, a sharp crackling sound, as described at page 31, should be caused to emanate from the cards; this materially assists the illusion.

When the required number of cards have been removed, several will remain, and to make the trick complete, these must be recovered. To do this, the performer again spreads the pack fan-wise, then closing it, he appears to again place it in the left hand; in reality, however, it is palmed in the right, and forthwith thrust into the pocket to be immediately produced together with the odd cards, while at the same moment the left hand is opened and shown empty.

This last movement, which is known as the "Vanish and Recovery," gives the audience the impression that the whole of the cards leave the left hand and pass along the sleeve into the pocket. At other times, the cards may be produced from the left elbow or from the back of either knee; and by bringing the left hand down smartly on the base of the skull, at the same time producing the cards from the nose, they will seem to have been passed through the head. In all cases, when "producing the palm," the cards should be spread out in the form of a fan, as this, while adding greatly to the effect, leads the spectators to believe that it is absolutely impossible to hold such a quantity in the hand, unobserved, even for a moment. The "fan" is made with a slight movement of the fingers and thumb, and will be acquired readily in

practice; it is next to impossible to explain it on paper.

Card, Coin, and Candle.—The trick about to be described forms one of the prettiest combinations in the whole range of card conjuring. In effect it is as follows:

A selected card is placed in the band of a gentleman's hat. The performer then obtains the loan of a quarter; also a cigarette-paper. The cigarette-paper is handed to a lady, with a request that she will write her name or a short quotation thereon, and having done so, tear the paper in half, retaining one portion while she hands the remaining one to the performer. The performer now wraps the quarter in his half of the paper, and places the packet in the flame of a candle; a brilliant flash is seen, and paper and coin have vanished. The gentleman with the card is next requested to tear it in half; he does so, and finds imbedded therein the borrowed coin.

The candle, which so mysteriously caused the disappearance of the paper and coin, is now cut up into four pieces, from which one piece is selected by the audience. This portion is handed to the lady, who, on breaking it open, finds to her astonishment that it contains one-half of the cigarette-paper, which, on being fitted to that in her possession, completes the whole.

The necessary preparations are as follows:

In the first place, you must obtain two quarters of the same date, and as near alike in other respects as possible. Each coin must be marked in a similar manner, say with an "X" at the back of the head. A dummy package, apparently containing a quarter, but really empty, is made out of a piece of "flash" paper, and placed in readiness on the performer's table.

You must now prepare a card, by carefully splitting it from one end to the centre, and inserting in the opening thus made one of your marked quarters. This having been done, you close the two halves of the card with paste, and place it under a heavy weight until dry. When about to introduce the experiment, the prepared card is placed on the table, face downward, but out of sight of the audience. The other marked quarter is deposited in the right-hand trousers pocket.

You must next take a candle, a facsimile of the one you intended to use in the trick, and having cut it into four pieces, hollow out one piece to a little beyond the centre. In the hollow thus made you insert the half of the cigarette-paper, as required in the course of the trick. Having placed this prepared piece of candle in your left-hand trousers pocket, you are ready to introduce the experiment. (The other

three pieces of this candle should be hollowed out and kept for future occasions.)

The modus operandi is as follows:

After performing any minor trick with cards, you force a duplicate of the prepared card and leave it in the hands of the person who drew it, asking him to show it to several spectators. While he is doing this you return to your table, and lay the pack, face upward, on the card containing the quarter, while you request that careful note be made of the suit and value of the chosen card.

Now take up the pack from the table, bringing the trick card on the top in position for the "change" (see page 15). This done, take back the chosen card, and while returning with it to the stage change it for the top card, which forthwith place in a conspicuous position on your table, or, better still, ask some gentleman to be good enough to place it in the band of his hat.

You next obtain the loan of a marked quarter from some member of the audience, allowing several persons near him to see the mark. This will give you the opportunity of palming your own quarter from the right-hand pocket. Now, in the act of handing the borrowed coin for inspection on the opposite side of the room, you change it for that of your own, the mark on which is duly noted by several spectators,

including the gentleman with the card. You must be careful that the mark on your own coin is not described, unless you have noticed that that on the borrowed quarter is exactly similar, which it probably will be if you have marked yours with an "X." In this latter case, the effect will be much improved if the nature of the mark be generally known.

During this time, you will have dropped the actual borrowed coin into your right-hand pocket, for production later. You must now place your own coin, which is supposed to be the actual borrowed one, in full view on the table.

You next introduce the cigarette-paper, and proceed as already described. Now, on pretense of pulling back your sleeves, you lay your half of the paper on the table and over the dummy flash imitation of the quarter. Having arranged your sleeves, you take up the piece of paper, securing the dummy underneath, and proceed to wrap up the supposed borrowed coin. The package is now, apparently, placed in the flame of the candle, but really it is retained in the fingers, the dummy being made to take its place. The brilliant disappearance then follows.

The gentleman, at this point, is informed that he will find the coin in the chosen card, and while he is satisfying himself that it is really there, you stand at ease with the left hand in the trousers pocket. This

gives you the opportunity to remove the coin from the piece of paper and leave it in the pocket; and, at the same time, to introduce the paper into the hollow in the piece of candle.

The gentleman, having removed the coin from the card, takes it, in accordance with your instructions, to those spectators who examined the mark apart from the owner, and they are compelled to admit that it is that actually borrowed. You now take it yourself to the owner on the opposite side of the room, changing it as you go for his coin, which you will remember was left in the right-hand pocket, and, of course, he must admit that it is the piece he loaned. Should the persons near him wish to examine the mark, they may now, with safety, be allowed to do so.

Finally, you cut up the candle as explained, and have one piece selected; the other three pieces you allow to fall from the plate while in the auditorium, when they are at once picked up and examined. The remaining piece is changed, while returning to the stage, for that prepared with the piece of paper. This is done in the act of passing the plate from the right hand into the left, and should require no further explanation. You now, with a knife, proceed to open the piece of candle, commencing at the sound end; and when you arrive at the paper, you ask the lady to be good enough to remove it herself.

I have found, by experience, that it is best to use the trousers pockets in the above trick, also in many others of a similar nature, inasmuch as all the necessary movements may be executed while standing in a natural position without exciting the least suspicion.

The Card in the Candle.—This trick is to be recommended for the following reasons: The apparatus is very elegant and portable, and may always be used in the ordinary way as an ornament for the table, even when it is not desired to present the trick immediately under consideration.

Fig. 11.—The Card in the Candle

The necessary apparatus consists of an ordinary candlestick, a slender pattern in brass for preference, prepared as follows:

The foot is weighted with a piece of lead, a cavity being left between this and the foot proper for the purpose of concealing a card (see Fig. 11). To the top edge of the candlestick is hinged an arm of iron wire, the hinge being provided with a strong spiral spring with a tendency to keep the arm in an upright position behind the candle. The other end of the arm is provided with a metal clip for

holding a card, which, when the arm is in position, will appear to be in the flame of the candle.

To prepare for the trick, you load the arm with a duplicate of the card you intend to use, after which you pull down the arm and insert the card in the place provided for it in the foot of the candlestick.

You now force a card (see page 13), duplicate of the one in the candlestick, on some member of the audience, who, after taking due note of it, is requested to place it back in the pack and thoroughly shuffle the cards. At this stage of the trick, you take the candlestick in your hand, and ask the gentleman to take good aim and throw the cards at the candle. He does so, and immediately the chosen card appears in the flame.

All you have to do is to take hold of the candlestick near the foot, and, at the proper moment, extend the little finger slightly to release the arm, which forthwith flies up and brings the card into the desired position. The flame is, of course, extinguished by the force of the shock.

The card may be caused to appear by the pulling of a thread attached to a small metal button keeping the arm in position. In this case, the spring raising the arm must be more powerful. The thread should lead from the button, through a screw-eye at the

back of the table, to an assistant stationed at the wings. If this method be adopted, the candlestick should be made more stable by providing the foot with three small pin points, which would be pressed well into the table.

In the first method, the arm is kept in position by the substance of the card. For the sake of clearness, the sketch shows the base of the candlestick in section.

A New Method of Discovering a Chosen Card.—This is essentially a trick for expert sleight-of-hand performers, and when presented with dash never fails to have the desired effect.

In the first place, you hand the pack to be shuffled, after which a card is freely chosen. We will suppose the chosen card to be the knave of spades.

After due note has been taken of the card, you receive it back in the pack and make the "pass" (see page 12), in such a manner as to leave it fourth from the bottom. The cards are now shuffled, care being taken not to disturb the order of the four bottom ones.

You continue the trick by showing the bottom card, which is, we will suppose, the seven of hearts. You now lower the pack and draw out this card. Now show the next bottom card, which is, we will suppose, the eight of hearts. Again lowering the

pack, draw out this card and place it on the table by the side of the other one.

Show the next card, which is, we will suppose, the ace of diamonds. Now, lowering the pack, slip (see page 24) this card back a little with the third finger of the hand holding the cards, and draw out the next one, *i. e.*, the chosen card, laying it by the side of the other two on the table.

The ace of diamonds is now at the bottom of the pack, and it is necessary that you shuffle the cards so as to bring it to the top.

The three cards on the table are supposed to be the seven of hearts, the eight of hearts, and the ace of diamonds ; but really they are the seven and eight of hearts and the chosen card.

You must now obtain the assistance of some member of the audience, a lady, if possible, to whom you put the following questions : "Which card do you prefer, madam, the seven or eight of hearts, or the—ace of diamonds?" Owing to the pause, the lady will be almost sure to select the last mentioned card—this is what you require. You have now merely to "ruffle" the cards (see page 25) over the supposed ace of diamonds, when the chosen card is found in its place, and the ace on the top of the pack.

"But," says the reader, "suppose the lady had selected either of the other two cards." Well, suppose

she had—this is what would have happened. If the lady had selected the seven of hearts, you would have pushed it towards her saying, "Thank you, madam." Then turning to another lady you would say, "And which card do you prefer, madam—the eight of hearts or the ace of diamonds?" If the eight of hearts is selected, you would push it towards her, saying, "Thank you, madam; then I will take the one that remains." From this point you would proceed as before.

There is yet another contingency which may arise. Suppose the second lady had selected the ace of diamonds—in this case you would say, "Thank you, madam; then that leaves the other lady the eight of hearts." This would again leave you in a position to finish the trick.

There being no doubt in the minds of the spectators that the three cards on the table are indifferent ones, and as you appear to be so careless in your selection of the one for the final effect, the trick invariably causes much astonishment.

To Precipitate a Number of Cards.—Once the student has become proficient in the art of palming cards he may cause no little astonishment by exhibiting the trick I am about to describe.

The performer invites a gentleman to step forward and thoroughly examine the cards—a new pack, still

enclosed in the official wrapper may be handed to him, with a request that he will open the same—and having done so, to count out thirty into an ordinary tea plate provided for the purpose. He is next requested to cut the thirty cards into two portions, and to place the upper half in his pocket; and, having proceeded thus far, to count the cards remaining on the plate. We will suppose, for the sake of experiment, there are fourteen left; these are now given into the safe keeping of a spectator in the auditorium.

Having arranged matters thus, the performer undertakes to pass any number of cards invisibly from one person to the other at the mere word of command; the experiment to be afterward verified by each individual counting the cards in his possession. The number of cards precipitated in this manner is decided upon by the number of points on a card chosen, apparently, haphazard from a second pack.

As the effect of the trick depends entirely upon the extent to which you are able to satisfy the company as to the exact number of cards used, the gentleman should be asked to count slowly and deliberately. After the counting, the performer takes up the thirty cards, and, having called particular attention to the number about to be used, palms off four in the usual way. This done, he returns the remaining twenty-

six cards (the supposed thirty) to the plate, which is forthwith taken in the right hand for the purpose of concealing the "palm." The gentleman is now called upon to cut the cards into two portions, and to place the upper portion in his pocket; then to count the remaining portion, which is found to contain, we will say, fourteen cards. This being the case, then, instead of sixteen, as is generally supposed, the gentleman can only have twelve cards in his pocket—so much for the first part of the deception.

The fourteen cards remaining on the plate are now handed to a second spectator, which gives the operator the opportunity of adding, unobserved, the four palmed cards; this is best done by transferring the plate to the left hand, and taking up the cards with the right. Care must be taken that the cards are not counted at this stage of the trick, as should this happen, a fiasco will result; this, however, is obviated by requesting the holder to place the cards in his pocket.

The card selected to indicate the number to be passed from one person to the other is, of course, "forced" to correspond with the number palmed from the packet of thirty cards.

The trick is now practically done; all that remains is for the performer to play the part of an actor to the best of his ability, as upon this much of the success

of the trick depends. This being the case, he addresses the audience somewhat as follows :

"Ladies and gentlemen, this gentleman, your representative, has in his possession sixteen (no apologies; a perversion of the truth is admissible here) out of thirty cards counted by himself; and has also been good enough to count the remaining fourteen cards which are now in the possession of a gentleman amongst you. I would draw your special attention to the fact that the cards have, in each case, been counted by your representative.

"I shall now, by the power of magic, cause a number of cards to pass invisibly from this gentleman to the gentleman in the audience, in accordance with the number of pips on a card chosen haphazard by yourselves." (Here the second pack is introduced, and the proper card forced.) "Now, sir, are you ready? Thank you. Then when I count three, be good enough to raise a draught by blowing strongly in the direction of the gentleman with the fourteen cards. Now! one, two (quickly), two-and-a-half." The gentleman is sure to blow as the latter ejaculation escapes your lips, whereupon you reprimand him for being so careless, and thus endangering the success of the trick. This little by-play is sure to raise a good all-around laugh, which adds considerably to the entertainment. You continue, vigorously, "Now,

sir! we will try again—get ready—one, two, three, pass"—making a graceful movement with the wand in the direction the cards are supposed to travel.

The experiment is now verified by each individual counting the cards in his possession, when it is found that, by some mysterious means, the sixteen cards have dwindled down to twelve; while the packet of fourteen has been increased to eighteen cards.

From what has been said, it will be seen that the trick depends, for the most part, on the fact that the packet of cards in the possession of the temporary assistant is never counted; this, however, owing to the peculiar arrangement, utterly escapes notice; were it otherwise the trick, as described, would be impossible of execution.

The Card Banner (new method).—The trick I am about to describe is similar to a very old one, under the same cognomen, in which three chosen cards, shuffled with the rest of the pack, and thrown into the air, are caught on a black velvet banner. The means, however, by which the result is obtained are, in this case, entirely different; inasmuch as the properties may be handed for examination, which was not the case in the older method, the trick forms a decided novelty.

The performer hands for examination a piece of black silk, corded or otherwise, so long as the one

side is not distinguishable from the other, about eighteen inches square ; this he lays on the table, as shown in Fig. 12. In doing this, he takes care that the rear half comes immediately over three cards, which, by means of a little soap previously rubbed on their backs, and slight pressure, are caused to adhere to the silk. The cards are not observed prior to being covered, owing to the fact that their backs are of a similar pattern to the cloth on the table.

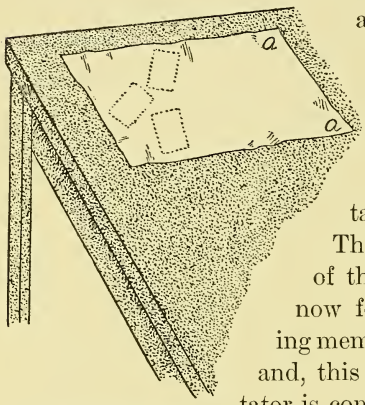


Fig. 12.—The Card Banner (First Stage)

Three cards, fac similes of those on the table, are now forced on unsuspecting members of the audience; and, this done, a fourth spectator is commissioned to collect the three cards, and to thoroughly shuffle them with the rest of the pack. This obliging individual is next induced to step upon the stage, and at the word "three" to throw the whole of the cards at the banner, which the performer holds up for that purpose, as shown in Fig. 13.

The performer announces that at the word "three" he will let fall two corners of the banner, when, if the gentleman will act in accordance with his instructions, the three chosen cards will appear thereon.

This is effected after the following manner:

The performer takes the two front corners of the silk ("a" in Fig. 12) between the first and second fingers, and folding it in half, grips the two opposite

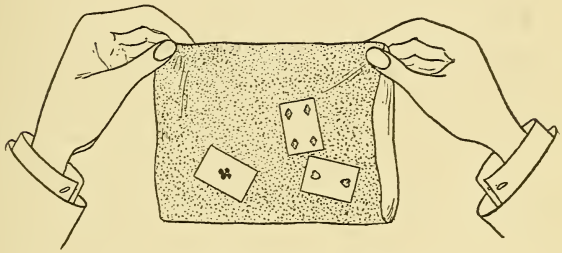


Fig. 13—The Card Banner (Second Stage)

corners between the first finger and the thumb of either hand, bringing it into position (see Fig. 13) with the three cards on the side most remote from the audience.

When announcing that he intends to let the banner fall open, the operator, by way of illustration, releases the two front corners, which, falling, give the impression that the silk has undergone no prepara-

tion. Again taking the silk into position, he exclaims, "Now, sir! are you ready?—thank you—then one, two, three," whereupon the gentleman throws the cards, and as they come in contact with the banner the performer releases the two back corners, thereby bringing the three duplicate cards into view.

The three select cards are on the floor with the others, but this is not at all likely to be noticed. Some performers, however, prefer to receive back the cards themselves, make the "pass," and "palm" them away before handing the pack to be shuffled, but this I consider an unnecessary "muddle" which I have never once found it advisable to adopt; at the same time, the trick thus worked is shorn considerably of its effect. Detection in the method explained is much less likely to occur than in the case of an indifferent "pass" or "palm."

CHAPTER III

TRICKS PERFORMED WITHOUT THE AID OF SLEIGHT OF HAND

Under this heading I purpose making the reader acquainted with a number of tricks that may be performed without the aid of sleight of hand or mechanical appliance. The sole apparatus required will be a pack of cards and one or two small accessories always to hand.

I must, however, caution the student against proceeding too hurriedly. These simple tricks must be presented with neatness and self-possession; and, in addition to this, to secure the maximum of effect, they require considerable address on the part of the operator. The effect will also in many cases be much improved by the introduction of one or other of the passes already explained.

With due regard to these few remarks the tyro may proceed with—

A Diamond Jubilee Trick.—The performer takes the ace, the eight, the nine, and the seven of diamonds, and exhibits them fan-wise; drawing attention to

the fact that the four cards represent the Diamond Jubilee Year, "1897." This done, the "fan" is closed, and placed on the top of the pack.

The uppermost card, *i. e.*, the ace, is removed and placed at the bottom, the two next following in different parts of the pack, while the last, *i. e.*, the seven, is allowed to remain on the top. At this stage, the company are requested to "cut" the pack as many times as they please, after which the cards are dealt out on the table; but, in spite of the frequent cuts, those representing "1897" are found all together. So much for the effect.

The result is obtained by arranging the "fan" with two odd cards, preferably of the diamond suit, in case they are accidentally exposed, behind the eight of diamonds. These two cards are those which become lost in the pack, and which the spectators suppose to be the eight and nine of diamonds. The next card is really the eight, but it is supposed to be the seven, and it must be shown as such before being finally left on the top of the pack. This is easily done by holding up the card, apparently in a careless manner, for inspection, and concealing the centre pip at one end with the first and second fingers. The company are now requested to observe that the cards are as far apart as they well could be; that one is at the bottom, one at the top, and two in different parts

of the pack. In reality, however, there is one at the bottom and three at the top, and it will be readily understood that the first cut brings them all together in the centre. From this point the cards may be cut any number of times, providing such number be even, without materially affecting the result.

To Cause Two Cards Placed in the Centre of the Pack to Appear on the Top.—The success of this experiment depends on the fact that not one person out of ten is able to remember, for any length of time, the names of two cards; say the seven of diamonds and the eight of clubs, without confusing their relative numbers.

When, therefore, the performer, in the latter stage of the trick under notice, shows two cards, alike in number but with the suits reversed, this confusion reaches its climax, and the spectators will readily believe them to be those originally shown; they will do so in any case rather than expose their inability to remember two cards.

Advantage is taken of this in the following manner: The performer prepares for the trick by placing two cards, say the seven of clubs and the eight of diamonds, secretly on the top of the pack. He next openly removes the seven of diamonds and the eight of clubs, and shows them for examination, after which he requests some one to place them in different

parts of the pack. This done, he squares up the pack and places it on the table, and at the same time commands the two cards to appear on the top. The two top cards are now raised and handed for inspection, thus proving ostensibly that the command has been obeyed. If the performer is able to execute the first of the false shuffles (see page 21) with two cards, the effect of the trick will be heightened considerably.

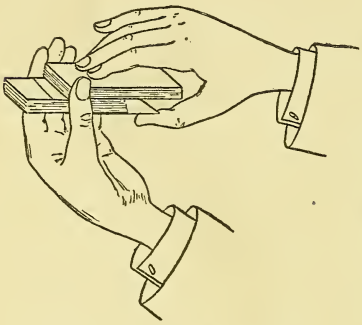


Fig. 14.—Naming a Chosen Card

To Instantly Name a Chosen Card.—The performer holds the pack as shown in Fig. 14, and with the second finger of the right hand draws back the top cards, one by one, inviting the bystanders to stop him at any card they please. When requested to stop, he removes the upper portion of the cards, with the one selected, ostensibly, at the bottom; in reality, however, while manipulating the top cards, the thumb of the right hand quietly draws out the bottom one, which is thus brought away at the

bottom of the upper portion, and appears to the onlookers to be that selected.

As the performer had previously made himself acquainted with the bottom card, he may at once name it; or the two portions may be placed together, due note having been taken of the card, and the pack handed to be shuffled. When returned, the performer may at once pick out the chosen card.

In addition to the foregoing, the trick provides a simple method of "forcing" a card, and may very well be used for that purpose until the tyro becomes proficient with the method described at page 13.

Odds and Evens.—This is an excellent little trick, and in effect is as follows:

The performer halves a pack of thirty-two cards, and has several cards chosen from each half. When noted, the cards are returned by the drawers themselves, who thoroughly shuffle them with the rest. The performer then takes each half, and immediately picks out the chosen cards.

The secret depends upon the separation of the odd cards from the even ones prior to presenting the trick, thus forming two portions which, while apparently made up of mixed cards, are readily distinguishable the one from the other. The ace, seven, nine, and knave may be considered as odd cards; and the eight, ten, queen and king as the even ones.

After the cards have been chosen, the operator has merely to make an exchange of the two halves, thereby handing the even cards to the person who holds the odd ones, and vice versa. The remaining portion of the trick follows as a matter of course.

An older form of this trick consists of dividing the red cards from the black ones, but in this case the arrangement can scarcely escape notice.

An Effective Method of Discovering a Chosen Card.—Hand the pack to be shuffled, and when returned, secretly note the bottom card. Now lay the cards in five or six heaps on the table, and request a bystander to look at the top card of either heap, and having done so, to replace it. This done, take up the heaps in such a manner that the original bottom card, which constitutes your "key," is brought immediately over the one chosen. The pack may now be cut any number of times with very little fear of separating the two cards. Should they by chance become separated, it will be at the point of the cut, which leaves them at the top and bottom of the pack respectively; but even this may be obviated by cutting an even number of times. In other words, should the first cut separate the cards, the second must naturally bring them together again.

To find the chosen card, then, the performer has simply to deal all on the table, and watch for the

"key"; when this appears, he knows the next is the one required, and makes a statement to this effect; but before turning it up he asks for the name of the card, thus proving that he does not expect any sympathy on the part of the drawer.

The above, however, is a very feeble way of terminating the trick. It may be worked up into a really startling illusion as follows:

Under the pretence of dealing out the cards to allow the drawer to ascertain the position of the one chosen —*i. e.*, whether near the top, bottom, or centre—the operator secretly makes himself acquainted with the card in the manner described. He now remarks, "Ladies and gentlemen, having devoted considerable time to the study of thought reading, I venture to give you an example of my powers by producing the card by such means. This gentleman informs me that his card is somewhere near the top of the pack. Now, sir, will you be good enough to take this portion of the cards (gives him upper half of pack) in your left hand? Thank you! Now please allow me to place my right hand on the cards, and my left on your forehead, to form an electrical circuit, which will convey to me, almost instantly, the name of the chosen card. Thank you, I have it! Your card, sir, was the—(naming the card)."

The above will give an idea of the way in which

an unimportant trick may be so improved as to compare favorably with a brilliant sleight-of-hand feat.

The Magnetized Cards.—This is a very effective trick, and one that may be presented at close quarters without fear of detection. In effect it is as follows:

The operator, having satisfied the company that his hands are free from preparation, places the palm of the left flat on the table. He next inserts a number of cards, one by one, between the hand and the table; and continues doing this until a complete circle has been formed, under and all around the hand, of about one foot in diameter. This done, the hand is raised, when, to the suprise of all present, the cards adhere to the palm, and may be moved about in any direction without fear of any falling. Finally, at the word of command, the cards fall to the ground, when each and every one, as well as the hand of the performer, may be examined.

The secret lies in the use of a pin, or better still, a needle, which is passed through the thick skin at the root of the second finger; the needle, when properly inserted, should lie in a line with the finger. The first card is placed between the point of the needle and the fingers; the second between the eye and the palm of the hand; the third and fourth on either side between the hand and those already in position, the remainder being fixed up, as required, in a similar

manner. Finally, after the hand has been raised and turned over, one or two cards are added to conceal the means of retention, after which the whole may be passed right under the eyes of a spectator without any fear of the secret being discovered.

To dislodge the needle, thus causing the cards to fall to the ground, you have merely to press lightly with the tips of the fingers.

Foretelling Thought with Cards.—This trick is performed by means of a piquet pack, of thirty-two cards, pre-arranged in a given order. Any pack of cards may be made to answer the purpose by removing the twos, threes, fours, fives, and sixes of each suit. The arrangement generally employed is as follows :

1. Ace of diamonds.
2. Seven of clubs.
3. King of hearts.
4. Eight of spades.
5. Queen of diamonds.
6. Nine of clubs.
7. Knave of hearts.
8. Ten of spades.
9. Ace of spades.
10. Seven of diamonds.
11. King of clubs.
12. Eight of hearts.
13. Queen of spades.
14. Nine of diamonds.
15. Knave of clubs.
16. Ten of hearts.
17. Ace of hearts.
18. Seven of spades.
19. King of diamonds.
20. Eight of clubs.
21. Queen of hearts.
22. Nine of spades.
23. Knave of diamonds.
24. Ten of clubs.
25. Ace of clubs.
26. Seven of hearts.

27. King of spades.
28. Eight of diamonds.
29. Queen of clubs.
30. Nine of hearts.
31. Knave of spades.
32. Ten of diamonds.

It will be noticed that the regular order of sequence of the four suits is unavoidably broken at the ninth card, but this will cause no difficulty if due note be taken that the ace in each round is always of the same suit as the ten which immediately precedes it.

Having made yourself thoroughly acquainted with the above formula, take four slips of paper, and on one write the names of, say, the first six cards (not necessarily in the same order) ; on another the following nine cards ; on another the next seven cards in order ; and on the fourth the last ten cards. This done, take four envelopes, of sizes that admit of being placed one within the other, and having put one of the slips in each, seal all together. Thus arranged, the envelopes (apparently one only) are placed in a conspicuous position on the table.

The prepared pack is next divided into four heaps to correspond with the four slips of paper. The heaps should be laid on a plate, with the ends slightly overlapping the edge, so that when covered with a borrowed handkerchief their outlines may be readily distinguished. It will be well to place the heap corresponding to the slip in the smallest envelope, facing the spectators, as this will, in all prob-

ability, be the one chosen. It is more effective to produce the slip from the smallest of the four envelopes.

This done, you request a spectator to step forward and remove one of the packets from under the handkerchief, you turning your back while selection is made. It really does not matter what heap be chosen, as you are well acquainted with the cards in all of them, but in nine cases out of ten, the one nearest the spectators will be taken. You will readily discover which heap has been removed by the sinking down of the handkerchief on that side of the plate.

The envelope is now opened. If the piece of paper containing the names of the cards selected is in it, take it out (ignoring the presence of the second envelope), and show that it agrees; otherwise, you leave it and withdraw the second envelope, which must be treated in like manner, and so on until you come to the right slip.

You may vary the mise-en-scène by introducing the experiment as one in which Thought Reading plays a prominent part. To do this, you ask the gentleman to look at and remember, as far as possible, the cards in the packet chosen, and having done so, to place them in his pocket. This done, you join left hands, and immediately write the names of the cards on a blackboard.

To Discover a Chosen Card by Its Weight.—Hand the pack to be shuffled, and when returned count off twelve cards and lay aside the rest. This done, have a card freely chosen from the twelve, and when noted, receive it back in the right hand, and address the audience after the following manner: "Ladies and gentlemen, the most peculiar thing about a pack of cards is that their weights are all different. This, of course, is not noticeable at first sight, but with a highly developed sense of touch the difference is readily discernible. In support of what I say, I will ask any one of you to thoroughly shuffle this card, the weight of which I have duly noted, with the eleven others; and having done so to your satisfaction, to hand me back the cards one at a time. So soon as I receive the chosen card I will notify you of the fact by at once turning it up; this I am able to do owing to the weight of the card, with which I am now acquainted, being different from any of the others."

This excellent little trick is thus accomplished:

Having received the chosen card in the right hand—face downward, of course—the performer, while talking to the spectators, presses rather heavily with the thumb-nail on the right-hand corner of that end he is holding. The result is a slight bruise on the face of the card, imperceptible to the casual observer,

but quite sufficient to enable the operator to identify the card by touch. When receiving the cards, apparently to judge of their weight, they are placed alternately on the back of the right and left hand; but prior to placing each card in such position the performer holds it, by the opposite ends between the forefinger and thumb of each hand, as if hesitating what to do; by this means he is able to tell with certainty when he arrives at the marked card. Having found the card, it is laid on the back of the hand, which forthwith drops twelve inches or more, the performer remarking, "This is the one; the card selected this evening is one of the heaviest in the pack."

To Name Cards in a Pack Previously Shuffled, without Seeing Them.—This is the title of a very old trick, in which all the cards in a pack, duly shuffled, are named without seeing them. The great drawback, however, has always been the necessity of holding the pack behind the back for a few seconds before calling out the name of each card. I will now explain a method of producing a result, analogous to the old one, but brought about by entirely different means.

Hand the pack to be shuffled, and when returned hold it by the ends, face outwards, between the fingers and thumb of the right hand (see Fig. 9).

While held in this position, with the arm extended, the performer calls out the name of the front card, which is then removed and thrown on one side. This done, the next in order is named in like manner, and this is repeated as often as desired.

The result is obtained by using cards provided with an index pip in the corner. While holding the cards in the manner described, they are bent slightly in the manner indicated in Fig. 9, which admits of the performer getting sight, over the left-hand side of the pack, of the index on the left-hand bottom corner of the front card.

A quick glance, immediately after removing each card, will suffice to give the operator the desired information.

Artificial Clairvoyance.—For the successful performance of this trick two persons are necessary, the one acting as the exhibitor, and the other as the medium or clairvoyant.

The medium having left the room, the exhibitor requests some one to cut a pack of cards in half, and to place one half, face upwards, under his handkerchief. A throw of three dice may also be made, and covered in like manner with a second handkerchief. Ordinary cambric handkerchiefs should be used.

This done, the medium enters, and taking up the cards, still covered with the handkerchief, places the

package against his forehead in the approved clairvoyant manner. He next joins left hands with the subject, and commences to call out slowly and deliberately the names of the cards. Having named the whole of the cards, he takes up the three dice and deals with them in like manner.

The explanation is as follows :

When taking up the parcel, the medium does so in such a manner as to stretch the handkerchief well over the face of the top card, which is thereby, owing to the enlargement of the meshes of the cambric, rendered visible. In the act of placing the parcel to his forehead he, in a perfectly natural manner. brings it over the line of sight, and thus acquires a knowledge of the top card. Once this is known, it is a very simple matter, with the pack arranged in accordance with the formula given on page 67, to name the remaining cards. It is a good plan to write up the names on a blackboard as they are called out, and afterwards to compare the board with the cards in the handkerchief.

The foregoing explanation will apply equally well to the three dice.

Dominoes and various other articles will readily suggest themselves as suitable for the performance.

Long Distance Second Sight with Cards.—In this case, as in the above trick two performers are re-

quired, the one a lady acting the part of the medium, and the other a gentleman that of the exhibitor. The lady, having been introduced, is escorted by members of the audience to a room in a part of the house farthest remote from the stage, and secured there under lock and key.

When this has been done to the satisfaction of all present, the exhibitor requests a gentleman to think of a card in an imaginary pack, and having done so to make a note of it in his pocket-book, as a safeguard against any mistake that might occur; also to write a note to the lady, asking her to tell him the name of the card he has mentally selected. This he does on any piece of paper, using whatever combination of words he pleases, and afterward seals it in an envelope, which he addresses to the medium.

The performer takes the envelope and hands it to a messenger, with a request that he will deliver it to the lady at once, and wait for an answer; he does so, and on his return the answer is found correct.

Here is the solution of the mystery:

In the first place, the performer must obtain a knowledge of the card. This is best done secretly, if possible, and the reader will now understand why the gentleman is requested to take a note of the card, as this enables the performer to take a quick glance

at the writing and thus obtain the desired information. Opportunity will generally be found for doing this unobserved; otherwise, it must be made an essential condition of the trick.

The name of the card is indicated to the medium by two finger-nail marks, one on each side of the envelope. The marks, which need be ever so slight, are best made when taking the envelope in the right

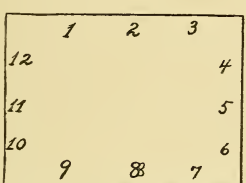


FIG. 15.—Divisions Showing Value of Cards

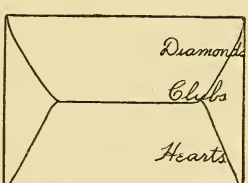


FIG. 16.—Showing Suits

hand and transferring it to the left in the act of handing it to the messenger.

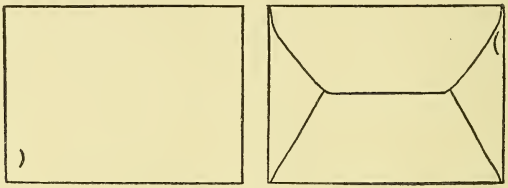
The front of the envelope is divided into twelve imaginary spaces (see Fig. 15), to represent the face value of the various cards: eleven equals knave, and twelve, queen. The king is indicated by leaving the front of the envelope quite free from any mark.

The right-hand end of the back of the envelope is marked off, in like manner, into three spaces, as representing three suits out of the four (see Fig. 16).

Spades are indicated by the method adopted for the kings; if, therefore, the card thought of be the king of spades the envelope is left untouched.

Figs. 17 and 18 represent, respectively, the front and back of an envelope marked to indicate that the ten of diamonds is the card thought of.

This trick produces a really startling effect, and is the more valuable inasmuch as it may be presented



Figs. 17 and 18.—Method of Indicating Card Thought of

with equal facility either in the drawing-room or on the public stage.

The Diminishing Cards (New Method).—I think I am right in stating that the trick, in some form or other, of the "Diminishing Cards" is a great favorite with the majority of conjurers. This being so, a description of it may be considered as somewhat reprehensible. I venture to think, however, that I may be the means of enlightening many professional performers, by describing a method, hitherto but

little known, and by adding a few "tips" for the better and more deceptive working of the trick.

The experiment has for its effect the diminution of an ordinary pack of cards, by eight successive stages, to about the size of a postage stamp; and, finally, to cause them to disappear entirely.

This extraordinary result is thus obtained:

You must first be provided with the necessary

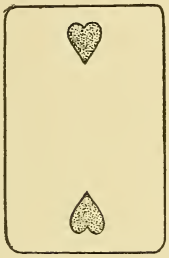


Fig. 19.—Ordinary Size

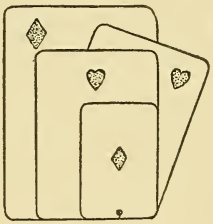


Fig. 20.—Relative Sizes of Four Packs

cards—says the reader, and he is right; "that does not sound very magical"—four packs in all; the first or largest size, which will be that in general use, and three smaller ones, the proportionate sizes of which are shown in Figs. 19 and 20. These three small packs, which need only contain about seven or eight cards, must be sewn together with strong silk in the centre of one end; the middle one of the

three small packs, however, is fitted with one loose card that may be withdrawn and replaced at pleasure. These three small packs are placed together, face upward, as shown in the accompanying figure, in which position they are held together by means of an elastic band; thus arranged, they are placed, small pack outward, in the left-hand trousers pocket. You are now ready to commence operations.

At the conclusion of any trick in which the ordinary cards have been used, the performer hands the pack to be shuffled, and while this is being done he stands with the left hand in the trousers pocket, a perfectly natural position, and thus secures, unobserved, the small cards, which are forthwith palmed in the fingers of the left hand; the face of the smallest pack should rest next the fingers. He next requests the individual who shuffled the cards to hand him back about half of them, and to hold up the other half in such a manner that every one may see the full size of the cards. Here a little by-play may be conveniently introduced. The performer informs the gentleman that he is not holding the cards properly, and exclaims: "My dear sir! that will never do; the cards cannot be seen half-way down the hall. Kindly hold them a little higher. Perhaps you would not mind standing up. Thank you,

that's better. Dear me! there's a lady at the bottom end of the room who cannot yet see the cards. Would you mind coming this way a little? Thank you, that's much better. (Brings gentleman near stage.) Well, really, there's a little boy down in the corner there who cannot see you, sir, let alone the cards. May I therefore ask you to kindly step up on the stage?" By this means, which, as a rule, gives rise to much hilarity on the part of the spectators, the services of the gentleman are secured, not infrequently against his wish; and this done, you ask him to stand on your left side, and hold the cards delicately, by one end, between the tips of the fingers and thumb of the right hand.

The performer, when receiving his portion of the cards from the gentleman, takes them with the right hand, immediately transferring them to the left and on to the top of the packet of small ones. From this point the trick proceeds as follows:

First Size.—Open the large cards, fan-wise, to their full extent, using both hands.

Second Size.—Push the cards half-way down in the left hand, then open them slightly, when they will appear considerably reduced in size. Practice this movement in front of a mirror and you will find it forms a perfect illusion.

Third Size.—In the act of closing up the second

size (large cards), palm them off, and push up the next pack. (N. B.—The performer now notices for the first time that his assistant is not making any progress, and interrogates him somewhat after the following style: "My dear sir, this will never do; you must make the cards grow smaller. Just give them to me for one moment (takes cards from gentleman quickly with the right hand, which, it will be remembered, contains the "palm") and kindly stand over on my right. I ought to have thought of this before; it is of course necessary that you should be on the right side.") Here the whole of the cards are handed back to the assistant, or they may be thrown on the table, leaving the right hand empty, and the trick proceeds.

Fourth Size.—Treat the cards in exactly the same way as for the second size, showing the right hand in a casual manner after the change.

Fifth Size.—Palm off the cards (second pack) and push up the next in order, which, it will be remembered, contains the loose card. Having pushed up the loose card, the performer requests the gentleman to remove one (he will be sure to take the "plant"), and compare the pattern with that of the cards he holds. While this is being done, ample opportunity will be found for disposing of the palmed cards. The loose card returned, proceed.

Sixth Size.—Adopt the method adopted for the second and fourth sizes.

Seventh Size.—Palm off the cards (third pack) and push up the smallest pack, and exclaim: "And now, you see, the cards are very small indeed; so small, in fact, that a quarter would almost cover them." Saying which, you thrust the right hand into the trousers pocket in search of a coin with which, by comparison with the cards, to verify your statement. Lovely, is it not? Could there possibly be a more deceptive movement?

Eighth Size.—There is really no eighth size in the sense of the term; this time the cards are caused to vanish entirely. This is how it is done: Having arrived at this stage of the trick, the performer pretends to overhear a remark to the following effect, "Surely, he cannot make them much smaller!" to which he replies, "Smaller? Certainly, with pleasure." Then, holding the cards in the right hand, he appears to take them in the left. In reality, however, they are allowed to slip back behind the fingers of the right hand. The left hand now appears to rub the cards into the right elbow, while at the same time the right hand, which is naturally raised to a level with the head, drops the "palm" into the collar. The rubbing motion concluded, the magician remarks: "And now, you see, the cards have

become so small that it is impossible to view them with the naked eye."

Notes on the Above Trick.—First.—It is hardly necessary to inform the embryo conjurer that the cards used should be of the same pattern throughout, and that the face cards of each pack should be of the same suit and value.

Second.—The palming away of the various packs is the less likely to be observed owing to the fact that it is done under cover of the "patter." Example: "Ladies and gentlemen, kindly allow me in the first place to draw your attention to the full size of the cards. (Spreads large cards fan-wise.) I shall now endeavor to produce a most extraordinary effect; by simply closing up the cards, and giving them a little squeeze, like this (here the cards are palmed), they will become one size smaller. You will be able the better to appreciate the change by comparing this size with that the gentleman is holding." In all cases the cards are shown fan-wise, and closed up and palmed, where necessary, before showing the next size.

Third.—Another excellent method of commencing the trick is the following: At the close of the "cards passing up the sleeve" arrange to vanish the three last cards together by palming, and at the same time announce that they have traveled into the left-hand

trousers pocket. Having shown the left hand empty, thrust it forthwith into the pocket in search of the cards, and not finding them, exclaim : "Well, really, that's funny! I rarely make a mistake; the cards seem to have strayed. Oh! perhaps they have gone into the other pocket. I may have given them too hard a push." Saying this, thrust the right hand, which during the above allocation has remained resting on the hip with the cards palmed, into the pocket on that side. The palmed cards are now withdrawn, and placed on the top of the packet of small ones obtained by the above ruse from the left-hand pocket. Proceed.

FOURTH.—Instead of returning the cards to the assistant, in the early stages of the trick, you may vary the procedure somewhat by throwing them on the table. This done, there is no necessity to pocket the second pack; a better plan will be to drop it on the table under cover of picking up one of the large cards to show that the pattern agrees with that of the smaller cards in the hand.

FIFTH.—This is a little arrangement of my own for concluding the trick: The smallest packet is closed up and apparently placed in the left hand; in reality, however, it is palmed in the right hand, which forthwith picks up an ordinary tea plate, on which is a lighted candle. In doing this the "palm"

is dropped into a drawer, left a little way open, at the rear of the table. The left hand now makes a slight rubbing motion over the candle, seeming to pass the cards into the flame. This done, the plate is transferred to the left hand, while at the same time the right hand produces a number of cards, full size, from underneath the plate, the inference being that the small cards have been restored to their normal condition by passing through the candle. This latter effect is obtained by taking up, with the plate, the required number of cards; this is best done by placing the cards underneath the plate, allowing both to project slightly over the rear edge of the table, immediately over the partly open drawer.

I have dwelt at some length on the above trick, but have found this advisable, inasmuch as the various sleights and subtleties employed will be found, for the most part, to apply equally well to objects other than cards; they will also be found indispensably necessary in the working up of new tricks—in other words, I have endeavored to make this an object lesson in sleight of hand.

CHAPTER IV

TRICKS WITH SPECIAL CARDS AND APPARATUS

TRICKS of this class are very numerous, and, on this account, I cannot do more, in the space at my disposal, than notice a few of the most important ones, not omitting several old-time auxiliaries of general utility, in the shape of specially prepared cards. First and foremost of these trick cards is that known as—

The Long Card.—This, as its name implies, is a card a trifle longer (or wider, as the case may be), say by about one-sixteenth inch, than the rest of the pack. The value of such an expedient will be appreciated by the novice when he knows that the whereabouts of the card may be readily discovered by the sense of touch, and that it may be secretly brought to the bottom by merely cutting the cards. The long card may be manufactured at home by cutting a narrow strip from one end of all the cards save one; but greater satisfaction will be obtained by placing the matter in the hands of a local printer.

Longs and Shorts.—This is an extension of the

principle of the long card. In this case two packs are employed, the whole of the cards in one being cut down as explained above. Any card in the unprepared pack may now be inserted in the other to form the long card, thus enabling the operator to avoid the suspicion which would naturally arise from the performance of several tricks with the same card. The professional conjurer rarely ever resorts to such an expedient as the long card in its simplest form, as he is able to produce the same results by sleight of hand; but "Longs and Shorts" are a valuable resource in many stage tricks, and are frequently employed.

Tricks with the Long Card.—A card having been freely chosen, the drawer is requested to return it to the pack; this he does, the performer opening the pack for the purpose by cutting at the long card. The chosen card is thus brought immediately below the long one, and the pack may now be cut any number of times, and even shuffled moderately, without fear of separating the two cards. It now only remains to reveal the chosen card, and this may be done in a variety of ways. For instance, the performer may deal the cards on the table, and when he arrives at the long card may boldly announce that the next is the one chosen; or he may air his knowledge by simply cutting at the chosen card, the pro-

jecting edges of the one above it enabling him to do this with certainty. But these are tame conclusions. A more subtle method is the following :

The performer brings the card to the top by means of the cut, and, this done, undertakes to produce it at any number in the pack. We will suppose eleven to be the number chosen. He first shows, by counting off eleven cards face downward on the table, that the chosen one is not already in position, and then returns the eleven cards as they lay, which movement very naturally places the card at the required number. He now commences to count again, but when five or six cards have been removed, suddenly exclaims, " I am really very sorry, ladies and gentlemen, but I am becoming quite nervous. (Shakes.) I am taken with these fits occasionally. (Replaces cards.) Will someone kindly count the cards for me?"

A volunteer having come forward, the cards are now counted, with the result that the chosen one is found at the required number.

The above forms a very good example of misdirection, an all-important phase of deception, and is introduced solely with the view of rendering the spectators the less likely to discover the true means employed (see Chapter V).

Given the power of forcing, effective use may be

made of the long card as follows: Force the long card, and this done, offer the pack to the drawer, that he may return his card and thoroughly shuffle it with the rest. This, of course, he may do to any extent without in any way endangering the success of the trick; hence the advantage referred to above.

The shuffle completed, the performer takes the cards, and by means of the cut brings the chosen one to the bottom. He next places the cards face downward on a sheet of plain white paper, duly examined, and proceeds to wrap them therein. This done, he holds the package thus made over the flame of a candle for a few seconds, taking care, however, not to scorch the paper. On removing the package from the source of heat, the name of the card is found written thereon in jet-black letters; and on breaking through that portion of the paper on which is the name, the chosen card is, of course, discovered.

The means by which this surprising result is obtained is fully explained at page 100.

For the benefit of those unskilled in sleight of hand, I may mention that, having brought the long card to the bottom, it may be forced on the unwary by the simple method given at page 62. There are, of course, many ways in which the card, duly forced, may be afterward revealed, but having said so much, I must now leave these to the ingenuity of the reader.

Tricks with Long and Short Packs.—One of the best tricks performed by the aid of "Longs and Shorts" is that known as—

The Demon Cards.—In effect the trick is as follows: The performer obtains the assistance of some gentleman from the audience, to whom he hands the cards with a request that, having shuffled them thoroughly, he will allow five or six of the spectators to each select one card; this he does, and returns the remainder to the performer.

On receiving the cards from his temporary assistant, the performer returns to his table, and places them in a glass tumbler, and then hands both tumbler and cards to the gentleman, asking him to be good enough to collect the chosen cards, allowing each person himself to place his card in the pack contained in the tumbler; and this done, to remove all the cards, thoroughly shuffle, and place them in his pocket.

The performer now, although actually unacquainted with the exact number of cards drawn, undertakes to produce them all, no more and no less, one by one from the gentleman's pocket.

What makes the trick appear the more marvelous is the fact that the audience are quite convinced that the conjurer never once touches the cards. In support of this I would mention that I have on several

occasions overheard auditors in debate on the merits of this and tricks of a similar nature; and the one invariably elicits from the other the reply, "But he never once touched the cards"—a proof of the gullibility of the spectators and their inability to give a correct report of what they witnessed.

The secret depends upon the fact that, during the brief transit from the front to the rear of the stage in quest of the tumbler, the performer changes the long pack, from which the cards were drawn, for the short one; when, therefore, the cards are returned they each become a long card, and thus it will be seen that the wonderful production is not, after all, a difficult matter.

The following will serve to illustrate the value of long and short packs for purposes of stage conjuring. Take the case of the trick in which five chosen cards are caused to appear on the points of the Fairy Star (see Fig. 25), or any piece of apparatus suitable for a production of this kind. In the older forms of the trick this was done by attaching the cards to the points of the star beforehand, and forcing duplicates in the course of the performance. With the aid of "Longs and Shorts" the forcing is done away with, and, consequently, the trick passes off with much greater éclat.

The performer allows five cards to be freely chosen

from the long pack. Then, while returning to the person who first drew, in order that he may replace his card, he changes the long for the short pack; the rest follows as a matter of course, each person returning his card and shuffling to his heart's content.

The method of discovering the chosen cards being understood, it now only remains to explain the method in which they are placed in position on the star. In the case of forcing the cards, the star will be placed on the stage at the commencement of the performance, but in the method under consideration it will remain in the hands of an assistant at the wings, to be brought on in the course of the trick. The chosen cards returned, the performer, as a preliminary test of his ability, undertakes to produce them by sleight of hand. This he does, say, by bringing one to the top by the "pass," palming it, and finally causing it to pass through a borrowed handkerchief (see page 37). By way of variation he may simply cut at the second card. The third may be brought to the bottom by the "pass" and revealed by the method described at page 88. In the fourth case he may show a wrong card, and instantly cause it to change to the right one (see page 17). The fifth card may be brought to the bottom and the pack placed on a person's hand, the card being ordered to

pass downward to the palm, where, on raising the pack, it will of course be found.

In each case, when producing a card the performer takes care to name it aloud, ostensibly for the edification of the audience, but really for the information of the assistant at the wings, who, as each name is called out, fits, from a pack in his possession, a corresponding card to each point of the star, which he then brings forward and places on the table.

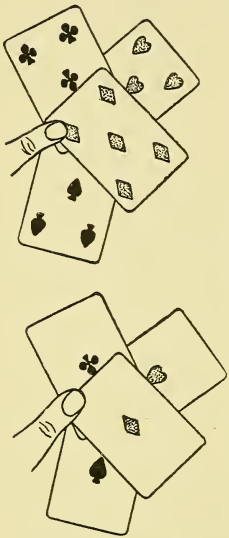


Fig. 21.—Changing Cards

Changing Cards.—There are many forms of changing cards, but these are, for the most part, purely mechanical novelties, and of little use for practical purposes. The only form of changing card, specially constructed for the purpose, that I have found of any service in connection with sleight of hand is that illustrated in Figs. 21, 22, 23, and 24. The dummy fives "A" in Fig. 22, as will be seen, may be readily constructed from aces by simply adding pips as re-

quired; these, which should consist of surface paper only peeled from pips neatly cut from another card, may be attached with a little paste and pressure in a manner that will defy detection unless examined at very close quarters. With the aid of the ordinary five, the cards in Fig. 21 may be caused to appear all fives. Then, by substituting an ace of the required suit for the five, closing up the "fan" and opening it at the reverse end, the cards may be shown as in Fig. 21. Similarly, by using three cards constructed as "B" in Fig. 23, fives or threes may be shown at pleasure.

Fig. 22.—Changing Cards

The two cards "C" and "D" in Fig. 24 will be best made from an ace and a five respectively. The first, "C," may be caused to represent an ace or a three; and the second, "D," a five or a nine, according to the manner in which they are held, with the fingers covering either the empty spaces or the additional pips.

Fig. 23.—Changing Cards

This class of trick card, being readily made to

match the pack in general use, will, in combination with sleight of hand, be found productive of some surprising results; the following will serve as an example:

Place the trick card "D" in Fig. 24 on the top of the pack, on this the ordinary nine, and on the top of all the five of the same suit. Make the "pass" to bring the three cards to the middle, and force the five on one person, and on another (who should be seated on the opposite side of the room) the nine. This done, again make the "pass," to bring the trick card to the top. After due note has been taken of the drawn cards, have one of them, say the five, returned to the pack, then taking the nine, "change" it (see page 15) for the trick card, and lay the pack aside. Now showing the card as the nine, hold it up in front of the person who drew that card and say, "This is your card, is it not?" to which he replies, "Yes, that is so." Turning to the

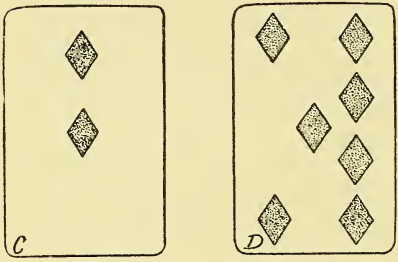


Fig. 24.—Changing Cards

other person, still holding the card in the same way, say, "Then of course it is not your card?" He naturally replies that it is not. Turning again to the first person, changing the card in transit by transferring it to the opposite hand, and blowing on the back of it, exclaim, "Change! It is now no longer your card, sir, but" (turning to the opposite person) "this gentleman's card.". The drawer of the five is compelled to admit that it is now his card. Turning once more to the drawer of the nine, holding the card carelessly face downward, ask him whose card he would like it to be. As it has just been proclaimed the five, he will naturally call for the nine, and you accordingly change it to that card. Finally, turning to the drawer of the five, you make to him a similar request, and he, knowing the card to be a nine, will in like manner call for the five. Changing the card for the last time, you say, "Quite right, sir, it is really your card." It could not possibly be the nine, for that card has all along remained at the bottom of the pack, where you now show it to be. Replacing the pack on the table, and in doing so again making the change, continue, "I am afraid this is a very volatile card; I could not guarantee it to remain anybody's card for long—well, really!" (turning up card) "it is now a totally different one." The trick card, which was left after the change at

the bottom of the pack, should be disposed of at the earliest opportunity.

The Fairy Star.—This is a very old trick, but in spite of this it still remains one of the best for the stage, especially when used in connection with "longs and shorts" (see page 90).

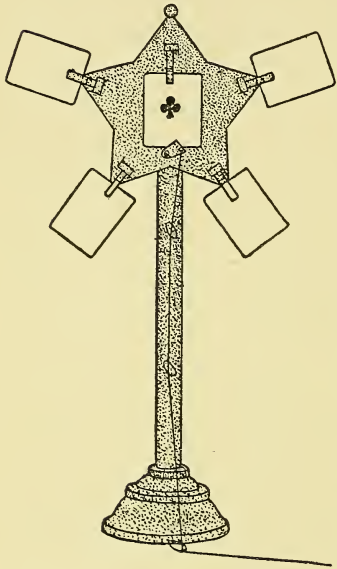


Fig. 25.—The Fairy Star

The apparatus usually takes the form of that shown in Fig. 25, which gives a back view of the star. To the centre of each point is attached a metal arm working on a spring hinge at the base, and provided with a clip at the opposite extremity to receive a card. When set ready for use the arms, each holding a card, are folded back on the body of the star, the hindermost one, which secures all the others, being kept in position by a metal button (see Fig.

25). To one end of this movable button is fixed a long black thread, which, passing through screw eyes in the pillar and base of the star, leads off to the assistant at the wings. Having named the five chosen cards (see page 90), the performer tears them up into small pieces, placing the fragments in a magic pistol which he then fires at the star. As the report of the pistol rings out the assistant pulls the thread, thus releasing the cards, which forthwith fly up into their respective positions.

Touching the age of the trick, I was recently very much amused by a performer who had taken the trouble to add an appendage to the star in the shape of a flowing tassel of silk, presumably for the purpose of decoration, but really to form the subject of a little repartee. His reply to a question put by a not over-courteous auditor was something after this style: "Yes, I am quite aware the trick is an old one; this is proved by the fact that it has begun to grow whiskers; but it is none the worse for that, it is merely another example of the survival of the fittest."

To Fire a Selected Card into either of Two Candles Burning on the Table.—This forms a really brilliant trick, and is especially suitable for the stage. The properties required are two candlesticks of the kind in every-day use, each fitted with

a candle equally guileless. In addition to these paraphernalia the magician must be provided with a small piece of candle (exactly similar to that used in the "Card, Coin, and Candle" trick, page 42) loaded with a card, from which a corner has been torn (as in the trick of the "Card and Cigarette," page 33); also a conjuring pistol.

To prepare for the trick, place the prepared piece of candle in the left-hand trousers pocket: and the duplicate card, together with the torn corner, on the table; have also near at hand a small plate and a table knife, and you are ready to commence operations.

The loose card is added to the pack in the manner described at page 35 and duly forced on some unsuspecting auditor. After due note has been taken of the card, the drawer is requested to tear it up into a number of small pieces; and while this is being done the performer returns to the table for his pistol, at the same time secretly taking up and palming the torn corner. The drawer is now requested to drop the mutilated card into the pistol, the mouth of which is provided with a piece of paper the better to receive the torn fragments; the chief use of the paper, however, is to conceal the presence of the cup in the mouth of the pistol cone. When the drawer of the card has placed the whole of the fragments in

the pistol, the performer, under pretence of proving the genuineness of the experiment, returns one portion (adroitly substituting the palmed piece) as a means of enabling the spectators to subsequently identify the card.

The removal, unobserved, of the cup containing the card from the cone must next receive attention. To do this, place the mouth of the pistol in the left hand, and address the audience somewhat as follows :—"A card, freely selected (another departure from the truth), has been torn to atoms and placed in that condition in this neat little pocket pistol. I now propose to fire the fragments at either of the two candles burning on the table—I leave it to you to decide which it shall be—and after the shot to produce the card completely restored, with the exception of one corner, from the one chosen. Now which of the two do you prefer, the right or the left?—the left—thank you—it really does not matter as in either case you would be right, but still I left it to you." Having delivered the above oration, the pistol is transferred to the right hand, leaving the cup behind in the left, to be dropped into the pocket on that side under cover of discharging the pistol.

An amusing little interlude may here be introduced with very good effect. The performer passes for examination a perfectly plain half sheet of note-

paper, and when returned offers to prove to the satisfaction of all present that the card is actually, at the present moment, firmly embedded in the selected candle. This he does by holding the paper over the flame of the candle for a few moments, and calling upon the card to write its name thereon; on removing the paper this is found to have been done. A beautiful illustration of a logical fallacy, is it not? Well, here is the secret. Some time before the entertainment the magician writes the name of the card on the paper with a sympathetic ink composed of one part of sulphuric acid to four or five parts of water. Written thus the name, when dry, is quite invisible, but the characters are quickly brought out in jet black by the application of heat. Another mystery solved.

To conclude the trick the performer cuts up the candle into four pieces, from which one is selected and finally exchanged for the prepared piece as explained at page 46. Having brought the card to light, it now only remains to have its identity proved by fitting to it the torn corner left in the possession of the auditor.

Card Cricket.—Having once acquired the power of forcing several cards, the means by which such cards may be afterwards revealed are almost unlimited. Here is another novel and interesting method.

In the first place the conjurer must provide himself with a cricket bat, not exactly a model of the one used by Grace, the renowned cricketer, but quite a primitive affair fashioned from a piece of plain flat deal and colored a dead black.

In addition to the bat a few preliminary preparations are necessary. Three cards, backed as usual to correspond with the cover of the table, are each pierced through the centre, from the face side, with a stout thumb tack, the point of which is left projecting from the back. It will be obvious that cards thus prepared may be readily caused to adhere to the bat by the simple expedient of laying it on the table with slight pressure immediately over the pins.

A conjurer once told me, quite seriously, that he was in the habit of using molasses in lieu of the pins. The trick may be equally effective that way, but when it comes to using molasses in connection with conjuring apparatus, I for one offer a decided objection: I never did like molasses.

The working of the trick is as follows: The performer first offers the bat for examination. He then returns to the stage, leaving the bat against a chair, and procures a pack of cards, from which three are forced in the usual way. This done, an obliging spectator who knows "something about cricket" is requested to collect the chosen cards and to thor-

oughly shuffle them with the rest of the pack. While he does this the performer returns to the stage, and takes up his position as a batsman, calling upon his temporary assistant, at the word "three," to bowl the cards straight at the bat. He accordingly commences to count, "One—wait one moment, if you please, sir" (lays bat on table with some pressure over the cards), "I shall never be able to hit the cards if you hold the pack that way" (takes pack and opens it fan-wise)—"there, just spread the cards a little to give me a chance of finding the selected ones." Saying this, he returns to the table for the bat, taking it up so as not to prematurely expose the three cards. Then, getting into position once more, he exclaims, "Now, sir, are you ready? Then one, two, three." The cards are thrown as directed, and as they come in contact with the bat the three chosen ones appear thereon. This is effected by the performer turning the bat round in the act of striking the cards, the movement being entirely lost owing to the motion of the bat. The experiment should be timed so that the cards appear on the bat at the same moment that it comes in contact with the pack, when the trick will be found to produce a perfect illusion.

The Cards and Boards.—This trick is similar in many respects to that last described, but I give it here for the sake of completeness; at the same time

the effect is good, and it will be found very useful in the case of a desire to vary the programme.

The performer passes for examination two plain deal boards, size about eleven inches by ten inches, colored a dead black, which, having successfully passed the scrutiny of the onlookers, he lays on the table.

Three cards are next selected by different members of the audience, and, after due note has been taken of them, are returned to the pack and shuffled with the rest, the whole being given into the safe keeping of another spectator. This done, the performer returns to the stage and places the two boards together, in which position they are secured by a stout cord, tied and sealed by one of the audience. At this stage of the proceedings the person with the pack is called upon to throw it with some force at the boards, which the performer holds up for that purpose. This he does, when, on separating the boards, the three chosen cards are found nailed between them.

The seeming mystery is thus explained: The three selected cards are forced, to correspond with three others arranged on the table in a similar manner to those in "Card Cricket." These three cards are attached to one of the boards in the act of laying it on the table. The trick is now practically finished; the

performer has merely to take care not to expose the cards when placing the boards together, the rest follows as a matter of course.

The Card and Bottle.—The trick of causing a chosen card to appear on the top of a wine bottle from which a quantity of wine has just been poured, has been known and worked for a number of years, but I venture to think that in the form here given it will be new to the majority of my readers. In this case there is no mechanism employed; the secret depends upon the pull of an invisible thread. The arrangements are as follows:

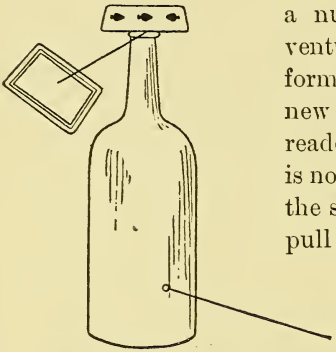


FIG. 26.—The Card and Bottle

A small hole is drilled through the side of the bottle about three inches from the bottom. Through this hole is passed a strong black thread, which is then brought out of the mouth of the bottle and attached to the card to appear (see Fig. 26), the card being drawn down and placed out of sight underneath the bottle. The bottle is next partly filled with wine, or water, which may be done by

closing the hole in the side with a small pellet of wax. The loose end of the thread in the hands of an assistant at the wings, and all is ready. The working of the trick is as follows :

The operator in the course of the performance takes up the bottle—lifting the concealed card at the same time—and pours out a glass of the fluid therein contained, which he either drinks himself or hands to the gentleman assisting him ; this, of course, is merely to show that the bottle is an ordinary one, and capable of containing fluid. He then replaces the bottle on the table and in doing so removes the pellet of wax, thus freeing the thread. The surface of the fluid remaining in the bottle is now below the hole, so there is no danger of it running out ; what remains, however, is very useful, as it serves to balance the bottle in the later stages of the trick.

A card, duplicate of the one under the bottle, is forced in the usual way, being afterwards returned and shuffled with the rest of the pack. At this stage of the trick the performer throws the cards on the table, and in doing so moves the bottle slightly, thus allowing the concealed card to mingle with the rest. He now picks out any card at random, say, the knave of clubs, and, laying it over the mouth of the bottle declares it to be the one chosen. He is, of course, quickly made acquainted with the fact that

he is wrong, and in reply says, "Dear me! I'm very sorry, I rarely ever make a mistake. Then you will not have the knave of clubs to rule over you?" Upon receiving a reply in the negative, he continues, "Well, in that case, if you will be good enough to tell me the name of the one chosen, I will ask the two cards to contest the position." The queen of hearts being given as the chosen card, the wizard exclaims, "Queen of hearts, if you have the greater right to the position on the throne I call upon you to dislodge this arrant knave (or, in the case of another card, this usurper)."

At this moment the assistant pulls the thread, which causes the knave to fall, a commotion is seen among the cards, and the queen of hearts appears on the top of the bottle.

The Rising Cards.—A time-honored trick and one justly worthy of affording another example of "the survival of the fittest;" but much that is new and interesting may be written in connection with these old-time marvels.

Three chosen cards returned and thoroughly shuffled with the rest are caused to rise from the pack, one by one, at the mere word of command. In order to prove the absence of motive power of any kind the cards are insulated from their surroundings by being placed in a glass tumbler, or other recep-

tacle—there are many designs—of a convenient size to hold and keep them together in an upright position.

From what I have gathered in conversation with other conjurers, they each and all have their own pet method of working the trick, which they "would not divulge for worlds and worlds." Perhaps this accounts for the fact that one rarely ever sees it performed. I am inclined to think, however, that the true reason is that it requires a good magician to work it successfully. I have known conjurers to attempt it once and once only, that once was their first and last time; and yet it is simple enough.

There are numerous ways of bringing about the result, but from the point of view of an audience they are all the same. For the sake of completeness, however, I will describe several of the best.

First Method.—The three cards are, of course, forced, and that being understood it only remains to explain how their duplicates are caused to rise from the glass. The motive power is again a black silk thread leading from the cards to an assistant at the wings. The arrangement is as shown at Fig. 27. A small slit is cut in the end of the first card, the one to the left in the figure, into which is inserted one end of the thread provided with a knot to keep it in position; it is then passed alternately under and

over the remaining cards. Those cards marked 1, 2, and 3 in Fig. 27 are the duplicates, and care must be taken to pass the thread under these; the intermediate cards simply act as fulcrums over which the thread passes. Thus arranged the seven cards are laid face upwards behind some object on the table.

Having forced the required number of cards, the performer returns to the table and lays the pack face upwards on the prepared cards while he hands the

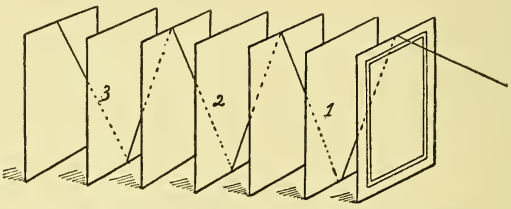


Fig. 27.—The Rising Cards. Arrangement of Thread

tumbler for examination. When the tumbler is returned, he takes up the pack, together with the seven cards, and places the whole therein (see Fig. 28). It is now merely a case of "pull the string and the figure moves," but this requires care; it is of the greatest importance that this be done in conjunction with the "patter" of the performer, and to insure this, several rehearsals will be necessary.

To admit of the thread being pulled at the most

convenient angle, it is passed through a screw eye in the rear edge of the table (see Fig. 28).

Second Method.—The trick may be made equally effective without the aid of an assistant. In this case the loose end of the thread, which is not more than two yards in length, is provided with a bent black pin to enable the performer to attach it to the lapel of his coat in the course of the performance. This he does with the disengaged hand while placing the cards in the glass.

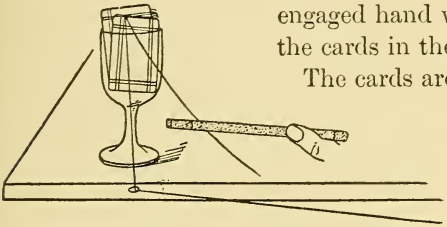


Fig. 28.—The Rising Cards as placed in tumbler

The cards are now caused to rise by the simple action of taking a step backwards; or by emphasizing the command with a graceful movement of the wand, bringing the same in contact with the thread (see Fig. 28).

Third Method.—This, in my opinion, is the very best method of working the trick.

The effect in this case is as follows:—The performer takes up an ordinary fan, with which he commences to fan the glass, whereupon a card is seen to rise slowly from the pack; this, on being removed,

is followed by another, and so on until all have been produced.

The beauty of the trick in this form lies in the fact that no assistant is required, neither is the thread attached to the performer in any way. The length of the thread, and the arrangement of the same on the cards, is the same as in the second method, the only difference being that the opposite end is attached to the top of the fan. It will thus be seen that from the commencement, the trick is practically finished. This being so, the performer should experience no anxiety as to its ultimate success ; all he has to do is to force the required number of cards, and to place the pack in the glass in accordance with the instructions already given ; what follows depends entirely on the skill he may have acquired in the manipulation of the fan.

Fourth Method.—This method differs somewhat from any of the others, being designed with a view to handing the cards and glass for inspection prior to each production. In addition to this the three cards are freely chosen, not forced. These desiderata are thus obtained :

The thread, in this case, is about three feet long, and is permanently attached by one end to the left lapel of the performer's coat. The opposite end is provided with a small pellet of wax, which is kept

ready to hand by being pressed on the lower button of the vest.

The first card returned, the performer makes the "pass" to bring it to the top. He next executes a false shuffle, after which the card is again brought to the centre by means of the "pass." The second card is now replaced on the top of the first, and the same procedure enacted; and likewise with the third card, the three being finally left on the top of the pack.

The performer now, holding the cards in the left hand, gives the glass for examination, and while it is out of his hand takes the opportunity of securing the pellet of wax from the vest button; then by simply transferring the pack to the right hand he attaches the thread to one end of the top card. Now, receiving the tumbler in the left hand, he places the pack therein, that end to which is attached the thread being, of course, at the bottom.

The cards are caused to rise by slightly extending the arm, or by raising the glass in the air, looking at it intently the while; or the wand may be again employed with good effect. The fulcrum, over which the thread passes, is, in this case, formed by the edge of the glass. When the card is a little more than half-way out of the glass the performer takes it in the right hand, again securing the pellet of wax,

and immediately hands the glass and cards for inspection. Throwing the loose card aside, he first takes back the pack, and in doing so again attaches the thread to the top card; then receiving back the tumbler he proceeds to produce the second, and so on with the remaining cards.

Fifth Method.—This is an arrangement of my own for working the trick without the aid of duplicates, and with three cards freely chosen from the pack.

The secret, in this case, lies in the use of "Longs and Shorts" (see page 85); and the thread, which is attached to the top of one card only (as in Fig. 27) will be best manipulated by an assistant. The card to which the thread is attached is laid face downwards on the table, and all is ready.

Three cards are first selected from the "long" pack, which is then changed for the "short" one, to which the three cards are returned and shuffled by their respective drawers. The three cards are now produced by sleight of hand (see page 91), and this done the pack is laid on the table, face downwards, on the top of the prepared card, while the glass is handed for inspection.

When the glass is returned the pack is placed therein, the prepared card being to the front; at the same time care is taken to allow the thread to lay

over the top of the pack. The performer now takes the three chosen cards and inserts them, one by one, in different parts of the pack, the result being that a portion of the thread is carried down with each. It will now be readily understood that the cards may be caused to rise, as in the preceding methods, by simply pulling the thread.

The trick of the "Rising Cards," as we have seen, is subject to much variation; and in addition to this, many amusing incidents, of which the following will serve as examples, are occasionally introduced.

One of the selected cards, say the knave of clubs, on rising does so with its back to the company, and upon being rebuked and thrust down again by the performer, reappears in the proper manner. There are, of course, two knaves employed in the trick, which are arranged to appear in succession, the first with its back, and the second with its face to the spectators. For obvious reasons the first card must be removed, and the performer does this hastily while assuming great indignation at such an undignified appearance; he, however, at once returns it, still with his back to the company, but in the front of the pack; and at the same time commands it to appear in a respectable manner. The second knave, which is taken for the first reversed, now appears in due course.

On reappearing in the proper manner the knave may be sentenced to dance a jig as a punishment for his unseemly behaviour. This he does, and finally jumps out of the pack. This latter effect is obtained by weighting the lower end of the card, and this is best done by inserting a strip of lead between the layers of pasteboard of which it is composed. Thus prepared the card is caused to rise and fall by alternately tightening and slackening the thread, and finally, with a quick jerk to jump clear out of the glass.

To cause a wrong card to rise, and then to change it to the one chosen, will also be found productive of some wonderment. This is accomplished as follows :

A duplicate of one of the chosen cards, say the seven of diamonds, duly arranged on the thread, is provided with an additional pip loosely attached by means of soap, so as to form an eight of the same suit. The spectators readily take the prepared card for a genuine eight, and as it rises from the glass the performer is quickly apprised of the fact that he has made a mistake! He thereupon affects surprise, and exclaims, "Dear me! not your card, madam? Well, really that's very strange. May I ask you to kindly name the one you chose?" Upon receiving a reply to the effect that the chosen

card was the seven of diamonds, he turns up the one in his hand, from which while talking he has secretly removed the loose pip, and shows that, by some unaccountable means, it is now the one selected.

It will be gathered from remarks previously made that this trick is one that requires a certain amount of sangfroid for its successful execution, but with ordinary care such mishaps as inadvertently running against the thread and thus upsetting the whole of the arrangements; placing the pack in the glass upside down, and thereby causing the wrong cards to rise; the jerking of a card out of the glass (fourth method), and causing it to dangle ignominiously in mid air; and others of an equally ludicrous nature, will be avoided. I have never once had an accident with the trick myself, but have seen all of the above happen; so speak advisedly.

The Cascade of Cards.—This trick forms an excellent sequel to the "Rising Cards," and when used in conjunction therewith, produces a most brilliant effect. I shall, therefore, describe it in the form best suited for this purpose.

Having arrived at the point in the preceding trick where the second card has been caused to rise, the performer removes the pack and lays it over the mouth of the tumbler as shown in Fig. 29. He is, of course, at once made acquainted with the fact that

he has not yet produced the third card, to which he replies, "Dear me! I am really very sorry, I had quite forgotten your card, madam. I trust you will pardon my negligence, as I fear it is now hopelessly lost in the pack. However, I will make an effort to find it. I will call upon

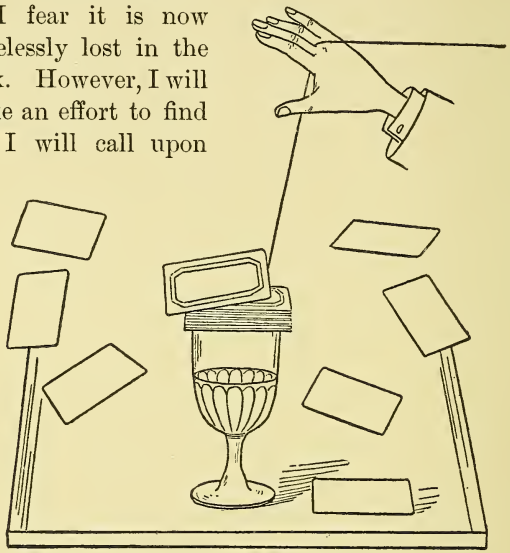


Fig. 29.—The Cascade of Cards

the four winds of heaven to concentrate themselves within the glass and to blow with great force upon the cards, and yours, madam, will in all probability become separated from the rest of the pack." Say-

ing this, he holds his right hand in the air immediately over, and about three feet above, the cards, when at the mere word of command they are seen to scatter themselves, with very pretty effect, to the right and left of the glass, thus forming the cascade from which the trick derives its name. When the chosen card is reached, instead of following the course of the others, it flies up into the outstretched hand of the performer, who forthwith hands it for examination. From this point the cascade ceases, a few cards still remaining on the top of the tumbler.

The secret is really an extension of the means employed in the "Rising Cards." The thread is first attached to the card to appear in the performer's hand (this card should be placed about fourth from the front of the pack as it stands in the tumbler), from whence it is passed, alternately, under and over the whole of the remaining cards; the two which are caused to rise in the ordinary way are, of course, arranged at the back of the pack as already described. The end of the thread is best attached to the last card by passing it through the centre, and afterwards inserting it in a minute slit, cut in one end. By this means it may be pulled clear of the card.

The working of the trick will now be understood, the only point in which it differs from the "Rising Cards" being that two packs must of necessity be

used. This, however, will present no difficulty, as the exchange may be readily made, unobserved, behind some object on the table. When removing the cards from the tumbler, and laying them over the mouth of the same, the performer takes care to pass the thread between the second and third fingers of the hand (see Fig. 29), which he now holds over the cards in the manner described. It will thus be seen that the fingers form the necessary fulcrum over which the thread passes.

The Dissected Card Box.—This is a very ingenious piece of apparatus and one that, seeing it may be used to produce, vanish, change, or restore a card, is well-nigh indispensable to the amateur conjurer. As its name implies, the box is so constructed that it may be taken to pieces, each part being given for examination immediately before commencing a trick; when returned the parts are reunited and the trick proceeds.

The box is made in two portions, the one being identical with the other, so that either may be caused to form the lid or bottom of the box according to the manner in which it is laid on the table; the two portions are hinged together at one side as shown in Fig. 30. The inside dimensions are such that will take a playing card comfortably; and the depth when closed is about one inch. The top and bottom

are movable sheets of brass, or other metal, kept in position by a groove on the one side and a spring clip on the other (see Fig. 30). In addition to the skeleton frame and the movable top and bottom there is a fourth part, which constitutes the secret of the apparatus; this takes the form of a loose slab of the same metal as that of which the top and bottom are made, fitting closely but loosely into the interior of the box, and provided for the purpose of concealing a card.

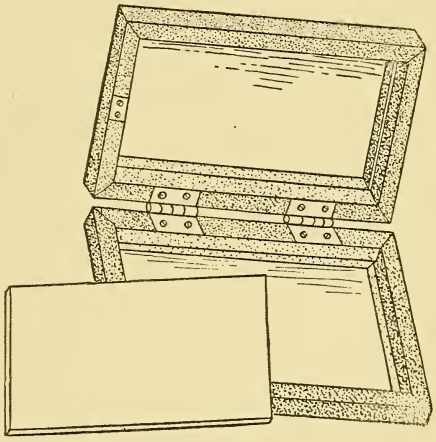


Fig. 30.—The Dissected Box

To prepare for a trick the performer places a card in the box and covers the same with the loose slab. This done the box may be shown as empty, but in order to disarm suspicion it is taken to pieces in front

of the spectators. This is the specialty of the apparatus, and is best done as follows : The loose slab and one of the movable portions, with the card between them, are first removed and laid (for convenience in picking up again) on the bottom of an inverted tumbler. The other portion is next removed and dropped, apparently by accident, on the table. This gives the impression that both it and its companion piece are unprepared. The skeleton frame is now handed for examination, and when all are satisfied that there is no trickery about it, the top and bottom are replaced. If this be done with care no one should doubt for a moment that the box is other than empty.

As before stated, the uses of the apparatus are various ; here are a few examples :

(a) For a magical production the card is placed face downward in the box and covered with the loose slab. Having satisfied every one that there is nothing concealed, the performer closes the box, and in doing so turns it over ; the slab falls into the opposite portion and along with it the card, which now appears face upward.

(b) To change one card for another the box is prepared as in "a." The card to be changed is in due course placed in the box, from which time the procedure is the same as when producing a card.

(c) The restoration of a burnt card from its ashes is simply the "change" in another form, and the box is prepared accordingly.

(d) When requiring to vanish a card the same is placed in the box on the top of the movable slab. The box is now closed smartly in such a manner that the card and slab fall into the opposite side, when, on raising the now uppermost portion, the card will seem to have disappeared. In this case the illusion will be rendered the more complete by afterwards dissecting the box.

With the aid of two of these boxes two drawn cards may be caused to change places at command. The boxes are first prepared by concealing a card beneath the loose flap, say the eight of diamonds in one and the queen of clubs in the other.

Two similar cards are now "forced" on members of the audience and afterwards placed one in each box; the eight of diamonds in that containing the queen of clubs, and vice versa. It now only remains to close the boxes in such a manner that the concealed card is brought uppermost in each case, when the two will appear to have changed places.

I do not recommend the use of the two boxes, as such a parade of apparatus savors too much of the school-boy form of magic for my liking. A single box artistically used in connection with sleight of

hand, however, will be found to afford pleasing variety.

Here is a modest little experiment of my own, which, if not of much importance in itself, will at least serve as an example for the arrangement of others. The trick consists of causing two cards, one placed in the box and the other in a borrowed hat, to change places at command. A changing card of the kind shown at "C" in Fig. 24 will also be required.

The box is prepared by concealing a three of diamonds under the loose flap. The trick card is laid on the top of the pack, on this is placed the ordinary three of diamonds, and on the top of all the ace of the same suit. Having satisfied the spectators that the box is empty, the performer takes up the cards, and making the "pass," forces the ace and the three of diamonds, and this done, again makes the pass to bring the trick card to the top. Laying the pack aside for a moment, he takes up the box and requests the person with the ace to place it therein; he does so, the box is closed so as to bring the three of diamonds uppermost and placed on the table. Again taking up the pack, the operator receives back the drawn three of diamonds, and while passing over to deposit it in the hat, changes it for the top card. Having shown the trick card as a three he lowers it into the hat.

To conclude the trick, the performer has merely to command the two cards to change places. Then opening the box, he shows the three in place of the ace; and on removing the card from the hat, holding it as required, it is seen to have likewise changed.

There are many forms of the "Card Box," the simplest being made in wood (solid) throughout, with a loose flap to match; but the one I have described is the most ingenious that has ever come under my notice.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

A FEW words of encouragement and guidance for those about to take up magic as a pastime or profitable hobby may be read with interest.

Progress must be made slowly. Perfection in any art is the result of regular, but steady, practice. The work of the skilled magician is no exception, and is the outcome of intelligent invention, profound devotion to his profession, and patient, never-wearying practice. A thorough theoretical knowledge of the manner in which an object is caused to disappear, will by no means suffice to produce the illusion, neither will it enable a person to detect the secret of other tricks ; he will be deceived over and over again by the same means. The reason for this is that in addition to a knowledge of the mechanical working, and even practice therewith, certain soul faculties are required, the ingenious use of which is vastly more important than either mechanism or dexterity ; without such faculties a performer will meet with but mediocre success. The tyro, therefore, who would

become a clever performer must study the art from a psychological aspect.

The apparent placing of a card, or other small object, in the left hand, which is afterwards opened and shown empty, is not sufficient—no matter how dexterous the "palm"—to produce a perfect illusion; unless some additional faculty be brought into play, the moment the hand is opened the onlookers will come to the conclusion, if they have not already done so, that it never really contained anything. The main secret lies in the power to so direct the thoughts of the spectators by actions and words that they are led, unconsciously as it were, to believe that the object was actually placed in the position indicated; this constitutes the art of misdirection, by far the most potent weapon of the modern magician. To successfully accomplish all this the conjurer must inspire confidence, be possessed of an imposing address, and able to surround himself with a magical atmosphere in which the spectators believe the most incredible things possible, and take the most simple as marvelous. He must, of course, himself believe that which he would have others believe. For instance, if he wishes to convey the idea that an object is in the left hand, it really being palmed in the right, he must himself believe that it is there. I am, however, from experience, fully cognizant of the fact

that a beginner will find considerable difficulty in doing this, owing to his attention being almost forcibly drawn in the opposite direction in his endeavors to retain the "palm," and an overdrawn anxiety as to whether it will be discovered; but as only he who is convinced can convince, the soi-disant magician must rid himself of this trouble at the earliest opportunity. In addition to this he will have to acquire the knack of following, simultaneously, two or more different ideas, *i. e.*, to execute certain sleights with his hands independently of sight, while addressing the audience on a subject quite apart from the manipulation; the necessity for this will be obvious. It will also be well, at times, to watch the expressions of certain auditors as a safeguard against impending dangers.

The expert takes due advantage of the human craze for imitation. An example or two will make all clear. Walk down the street, stop suddenly and gaze up a narrow courtway on the opposite side. Before many seconds have elapsed you will be joined by several persons all looking in the same direction. Then another and another will become interested until a small crowd congregates, all looking for something the nature of which they are totally ignorant. Leave this crowd, and, walking on a hundred yards, stop again and rub your hand on the

wall, looking intently at the spot the while. Then with a final rub, as if very unsatisfied with your examination, pass on a few paces. If you now turn round and take another look at the wall you will be very much amused to see several persons rubbing vigorously, and making a minute examination of the same spot. The reader will, doubtless, on more occasions than one, have had his attention drawn to the top of a house, or elsewhere, by a person looking in the same direction, and, not seeing anything of a startling nature, have passed on and forgotten all about the circumstance. Such cases are the result of an irresistible desire on the part of man to imitate his fellows. The magician, then, knows very well that if he wishes to draw the attention of the public in a certain direction he has merely to look pensively in that direction himself, indicating, for example, an imaginary red spot on the ceiling, caused, as he says, "by the ace of hearts having vanished that way;" and it is a funny sight, while thus engaged, to see the way his hands perform the "pass," count off a number of cards, or execute other manipulations as the nature of the trick may demand; or, having received back a chosen card, he may simply address the drawer something after this style, "Thank you, sir; you are quite sure you will recognize your card again?" This draws all eyes in the

direction of his face, and he makes the "pass" with impunity.

The conjurer also does his best to lead the public to believe that he performs all his wonders by skill and rapidity, and in this he seems generally successful; evidence of this lies in the time-worn expression, "Yes, it was really wonderful, but then, of course, the quickness of the hand deceives the eye," which ever and anon falls from the lips of the uninitiated after witnessing a performance of sleight of hand. In reality, however, the effects, as we have seen in the course of the present work, are obtained by totally different means, the performer being able for the most part to take what time he pleases in the execution of the various tricks. Apart from quickness, then, the magician must study to work gracefully and with great coolness. Rapidity of action is very often the cause of disastrous results, whereas the cool, collected performer rarely ever meets with a mishap. The caution for less haste has another significance. We will suppose the queen of hearts is to be transformed into the eight of spades by the "change." If owing to excitement, the sleight may be performed before due attention has been drawn to the card to be changed, the illusion is of course lost. Again, take the case of the card vanishing in the air. It would be rather depressing for the performer, after

having successfully vanished the card, to overhear the remark, "Yes, it's very good, but I'm not quite sure that he had the card in his hand."

The charm of the art does not lie in the ability to deceive the spectator with ape-like rapidity, but rather in the capability to impress him with the idea that he dwells for a time in a real palace of wonders. This latter achievement, from an æsthetic point of view, is much higher than the first, and claims the attention of persons from the best circles of society, causing them to take to conjuring readily, not merely with the idea of amusing others, but rather as a means of combining recreation with study.

Ladies learn, and not infrequently become accomplished performers. It would have been surprising were it not so. It is only natural for them to admire what is somewhat beyond their comprehension ; and there is a strange fascination for all in an art so varied, so mysterious, so old, yet always so new, as conjuring.

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